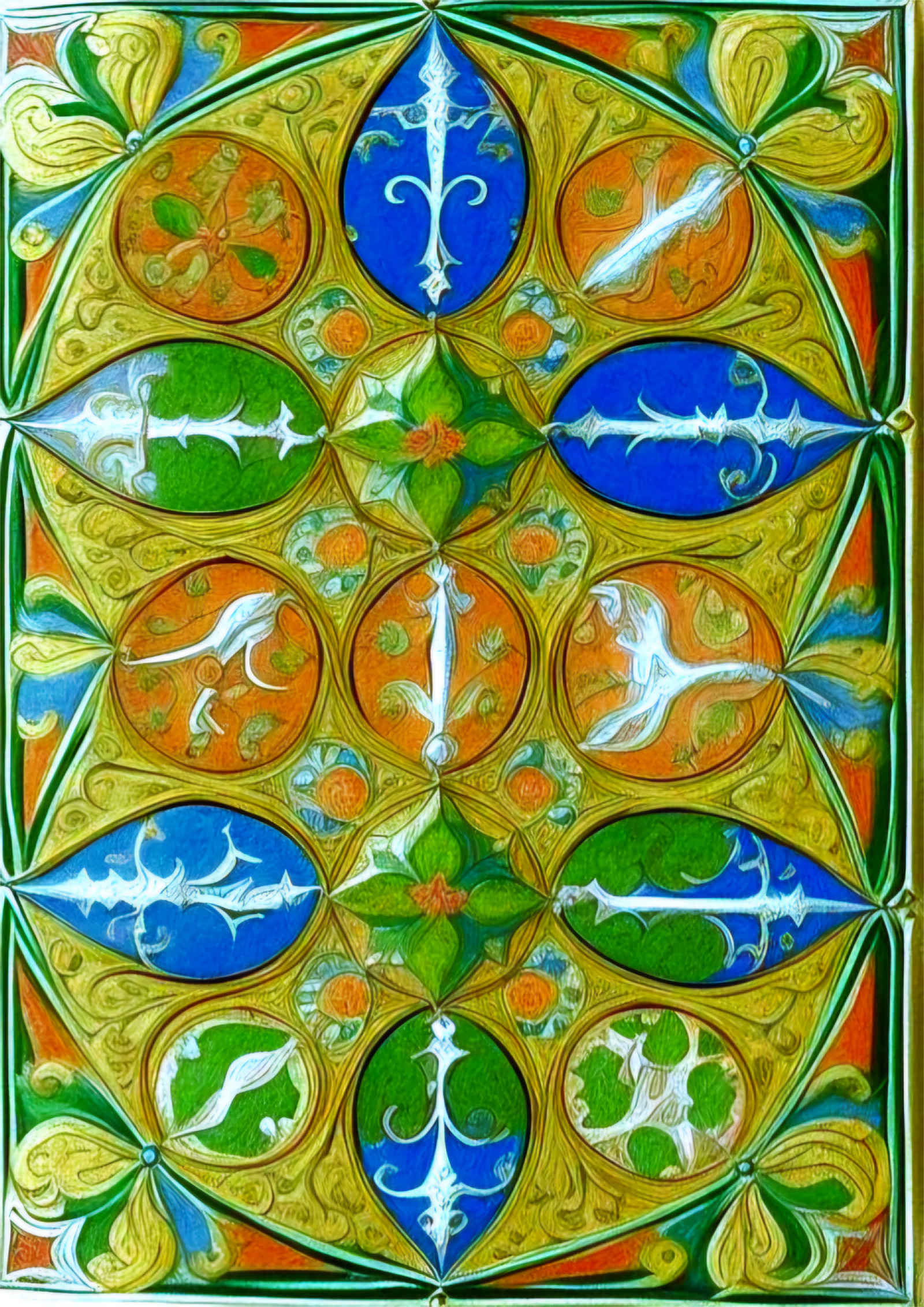

Sam'l. Miller.

A

KEY

TO THE

OLD TESTAMENT

AND

APOCRYPHA:

OR

AN ACCOUNT OF THEIR SEVERAL BOOKS,

THEIR

CONTENTS AND AUTHORS,

AND OF THE

TIMES IN WHICH THEY WERE RESPECTIVELY WRITTEN.

BY THE REV.
ROBERT GRAY, D. D.
PREBENDARY OF DURHAM.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

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TO THE

REV. JOSEPH HOLDEN POTT, A.M.

PREBENDARY OF LINCOLN, AND ARCHDEACON OF ST. ALBANS.

DEAR SIR,

THE happineſs I enjoy from that friendſhip with which you have long honoured me, and the reverence I entertain for the various excellencies of your character, excite me to profit, by every occaſion of expreſſing towards you my ſentiments of ſincere acknowledgment, and lively regard.

AT the firſt appearance of the following work, I did not think myſelf authoriſed to indulge my wiſhes in dedicating it to you; becauſe it had not been previouſly ſubmitted to your examination. Aware of that juſt veneration for the ſacred volume, which you derive from an intimate acquaintance with its contents, I knew with what concern you

would find your name employed to ſanction an account of the inſpired writings, if that account ſhould prove unworthy of your countenance. Since, however, the work has experienced a favourable reception, and you yourſelf have ſtamped a value on it, by your approbation; I do not heſitate, though ſtill without your permiſſion, to inſcribe to you the firſt fruits of my application to thoſe ſtudies which you have aſſiduouſly encouraged me to purſue. I could not, I truſt, offer you a more welcome tribute, than a proof of my admiration of thoſe Holy Scriptures, of which, by your judicious and elegant remarks, you have often pointed out the perfections, and of which you conſtantly illuſtrate the beneficial influence, by the diſtinguiſhed example of your converſation and life.

I beg at the ſame time to remain, with ſincere and affectionate reſpect,

DEAR SIR,

YOUR MOST FAITHFUL,

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

ROBERT GRAY.

PREFACE.

THE uſeful Key to the New Teſtament publiſhed by Doctor Percy, Biſhop of Dromore, firſt ſuggeſted the idea of the preſent work. It was apprehended that a ſimilar aſſiſtant to the peruſal of the Books of the Old Teſtament, would prove equally convenient to thoſe who have neither leiſure nor opportunities to conſult larger publications, for ſcattered information. A difference in the character of the books here treated of, has compelled the Editor to adopt a more diffuſive and diſcurſive method of conducting his ſubject than that which is followed by the learned Biſhop. The uncertainty of the dates and authors of ſome books, the objections to opinions generally eſtabliſhed, and the mixed character, and

miſcellaneous contents of the works conſidered, have neceſſarily occaſioned complicated and extended diſcuſſions.

The Editor was deſirous of exhibiting in one point of view, the probable period of each book, the character and deſign of its author, and the proofs of, or objections to its inſpiration. He wiſhed to preſent the reader with a general idea of the reſpective importance of each, of its intrinſic pretenſions, and external ſanctions, and to furniſh, in a compendious deſcription, whatever might contribute to illuſtrate its hiſtory and contents. This the Editor has done in a manner as conciſe as poſſible, conſidering it conſiſtent with his plan to prefix general information and remarks as introductory, and ſeparately to examine ſuch queſtions as were immediately connected with the ſcope of the individual book. He judged it improper to deliver opinions without ſtating the reaſons on which they were founded, or to adopt deciſions on diſputed or doubtful points, without producing, at leaſt, the moſt important objections that might be urged againſt them, leſt the Reader ſhould be led to decide on partial grounds.

Since

SINCE the books often contain paſſages of obſcure interpretation, and doubtful import, as likewiſe dates, names, and other particulars, upon the explanation of which their character for antiquity and authority muſt, in ſome meaſure reſt, it was impoſſible ſometimes to avoid critical and chronological queſtions. In conſequence of theſe, the notes have been increaſed in number and extent, beyond what was at firſt intended. The Reader will, however, hereby be ſaved the trouble of referring to commentators; or, if unwilling to acquieſce in the deciſion adopted, he may readily find the foundation and authorities on which it was eſtabliſhed.

As the inſpiration of the canonical books was to be proved, it was often requiſite to point out the accompliſhment of prophecy, which, therefore, the Editor has done, in the moſt ſignal inſtances, though commonly by reference only and curſory obſervation. He preſumes, however, that he has thereby often unfolded an intereſting ſcene, or opened a fruitful ſource of inſtructive enquiry. The importance, likewiſe, of ſome diſcoveries and remarks which learned com-

mentaries have furniſhed, has ſometimes tempted the Editor to introduce particulars that may be thought too minute for a general and compendious introduction; but he has uſually endeavoured to confine himſelf to ſuch comments as contribute to general illuſtration, or are explanatory of paſſages immediately ſubjected to the Reader's attention. He apprehends, that if the Reader ſhould occaſionally diſcover obſervations which reflect only an oblique or partial light on the ſacred volume, he will not be diſpleaſed, even though it ſhould appear that a larger ſpace is thereby allotted to ſome books than their comparative importance might ſeem to juſtify.

It was thought expedient alſo, occaſionally to advert to thoſe popular miſtakes, and light objections which float in ſociety, and operate on weak minds to the prejudice of the ſacred books, as the Editor was conſcious that fairly to ſtate was to refute them, and that they produce more than their due effect becauſe indiſtinctly viewed. In conſequence of this deſign, he may, perhaps, be thought to have introduced remarks too obvious and trivial. The ſincere and diſpaſſionate

paſſionate enquirer after truth, who has deliberately weighed the evidence on which the ſcriptures reſt, cannot readily believe that a paſſage partially conſidered, a miſconception of a revealed deſign, or a fancied inconſiſtency with pre-conceived opinions, ſhould be allowed to affect the character, or diminiſh the influence of the ſacred books; but experience fully proves, that theſe are the foundations on which ignorance and infidelity ground their diſreſpect for the inſpired writings.

The Editor has been cautious in treating of the canonical and apocryphal books, to diſcriminate their reſpective pretenſions with accuracy; ſince, however valuable the latter may be conſidered for their general excellence, it is neceſſary to keep inviolate, and free from all intermixture, that conſecrated canon in which the holy oracles were preſerved by the Jews, which was ſtamped as infallible by the teſtimony of Chriſt and his apoſtles, and which, in the firſt and pureſt ages of the church, was reverenced (together with the inſpired books of the New Teſtament) as the only ſource of revealed wiſdom.

The

THE whole deſign of the Editor has been to aſſiſt the Reader to form a juſt idea of the Old Teſtament, and of thoſe uninſpired books which were written under the firſt diſpenſation, and to furniſh him with ſuch introductory intelligence, as may enable him to read them with pleaſure and advantage. He lays claim to no praiſe, but that of having brought into a regular form ſuch information as he could collect from various works. He acknowledges himſelf in the moſt unreſtrained terms, to have borrowed from all authors of eſtabliſhed reputation, ſuch materials as he could find, after having deliberately conſidered and impartially collated their accounts. He has appropriated ſuch obvious information as was to be collected from thoſe writers who are univerſally known to have treated on the ſacred books [A], and he has endeavoured farther to enrich and ſubſtantiate his accounts by diligent and extenſive reſearch. He has not wiſhed to conceal the ſources from which he has drawn his information, nor has he ſcrupled in ſome minute inſtances to employ the words of thoſe writers from whom he

[A] As St. Jerom, Grotius, Huet, Calmet, Du Pin, Patrick, Lowth, &c.

has

has borrowed. He has often produced numerous authorities, not for oſtentation, but to confirm intereſting particulars, and to aſſiſt thoſe who may be inclined to inveſtigate facts, or to purſue the ſubject under conſideration. In important and controverted points, he has induſtriouſly conſulted the authorities on which his aſſertions reſt, but in matters of little moment, and where there could be no reaſon to ſuſpect miſrepreſentation, he has ſometimes taken up with cited references. He has adopted that plan which he thought would render his book moſt generally uſeful; and preſumes, that the uninformed may find it an inſtructive, and the learned a convenient compilation.

CON-

INTRODUCTION.

THE Bible, which in its original import implies only the book [A], is a word appropriated by way of eminence, to that collection of Scriptures, which have at different times been compoſed by perſons divinely inſpired. It contains the ſeveral revelations delivered from God to mankind for their inſtruction. Thoſe communicated before the birth of Chriſt, are included under that diviſion of the Bible, which is diſtinguiſhed by the title of the Old Teſtament [B], and of that diviſion only it is here meant to treat. The Old Teſtament comprehends all thoſe ſacred books which were written by the deſcendants of Iſrael, a people ſelected by God for important purpoſes, to "be a Kingdom of Prieſts, and an Holy Nation [C]." Among this people ſucceſſive prophets and inſpired writers were appointed

[A] Βιβλιον vel βιβλια, Liber, from βιβλος, an Egyptian reed, of the ſkin of which paper was made. Chryſoſt. Vol. x. p. 349. and Heum. de Origin. Nom. Bib. The Bible is by the Jews called Mikra, Lecture: thus the Koran means the reading.

[B] Teſtament ſignifies covenant, agreeably to the import of the Hebrew word Berith. Hieron. in Malach. cap. ii.

[C] Exod. xix. 6. xxxiii. 16. Levit. xx. 24, 26. Pſalm cxlvii. 19. Rom. iii. 2, ix. 4.

by God to convey ſuch prophecies and inſtructions as were inſtrumental to the deſigns of his providence. As theſe ſcriptures were produced, they were admitted into the ſacred volume, which by gradual accumulation, at length increaſed to its preſent ſize. Theſe being delivered to the Hebrews, in their own language [D], with every mark that could characterize divine revelations, were received with reverence, and preſerved with the moſt anxious care, and attention. Such only were accepted, as proceeded from perſons unqueſtionably inveſted with the prophetic character [E], or evidently authorized by a divine commiſſion, who acted under the ſanction of public appointment, and miraculous ſupport. The books which contained the precepts of the prophets, contained alſo the proofs of their inſpiration, and the teſtimonies of their character. By recording contemporary events they appealed to well-known evidence of their authority, their impartiality, and their adherence to truth, and every ſucceeding prophet confirmed the character of his predeceſſor, by relating the accompliſhment of prophecy in the hiſtory of his own period, or bore teſtimony to his pretenſions, by repeating and explaining his predictions.

To the writings of theſe inſpired perſons, other productions were afterwards annexed, on account of

[D] The Hebrew language, if not the firſt language of man, ſeems at leaſt to have higher pretenſions to antiquity than any other. The books of the Old Teſtament, are the only writings now extant in pure Hebrew.

[E] Joſeph. cont. Apion. Lib. I.

their

their valuable contents, and inſtructive tendency, though their claims to inſpiration have been juſtly rejected. Such only as were undeniably dictated by the ſpirit of God, were conſidered by the Jews as canonical [F], and ſuch only are received by us as a rule of faith and doctrine. The contents of the firſt diviſion of the Bible are therefore diſtinguiſhed into two claſſes. The firſt containing the books of acknowledged inſpiration; the ſecond compriſing thoſe which are intitled Apocryphal, as being of dubious, or ſuſpected character, and authority. The latter will be ſpoken of in a proper place, as in the preſent preliminary diſſertation, it is purpoſed to treat of ſuch only as are canonical, to trace a ſhort ſketch of their hiſtory in a general way; a particular account of each individual book being reſerved for a ſeparate chapter.

THOUGH the books of the Old Teſtament are not always chronologically arranged according to the order in which they were written, yet the Pentateuch was probably the firſt of thoſe productions which are contained in the inſpired volume.

THESE five books written by the hand of Moſes, and conſequently free from error, were ſecured as a ſacred depoſit in the tabernacle, where the ark of the covenant was placed [G]; and were kept there, as well during the journey through the wilderneſs, as

[F] The word Canon is derived from κανων, which may be interpreted, a rule or catalogue. Athan. Vol. x. p. 228. Hieron. Vol. x. p. 41. It here means a rule of doctrine.

[G] Deut. xxxi. 26.

for ſome time after at Jeruſalem. To the ſame ſanctuary were conſigned, as they were ſucceſſively produced, all thoſe hiſtorical [H], and prophetical books which were written from the time of Joſhua, to that of David, including their own works; during which period a ſeries of prophets flouriſhed in regular ſucceſſion. Solomon having afterwards erected a temple to the honour of God [I], appointed that in future the ſacred books ſhould be depoſited in this holy receptacle, and enriched the collection by the inſpired productions of his own pen. After him a ſucceſſion of illuſtrious prophets continued to denounce vengeance againſt the diſobedience of the Hebrew nation, and to predict the calamities which that diſobedience muſt inevitably produce. Jonah, Amos, Iſaiah, Hoſea, Joel, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Obadiah ſucceſſively flouriſhed before the deſtruction of the temple, and contributed by their unerring predictions, to demonſtrate the attributes and deſigns of providence, and to enlarge the volume of inſpired wiſdom by invaluable additions.

About 420 [K] years after its foundation, the temple being rifled and burnt by Nebuchadnezzar,

[H] The books do not ſtand in the order in which they were written: they were perhaps not arranged at firſt according to dates, or they might have been accidentally tranſpoſed in the manuſcript rolls: in different verſions, they are differently placed. Dupin Diſſert. Prel. Lib. I. ch. i. ſect. 7.

[I] The Temple was dedicated about A. M. 3000.

[K] Joſephus ſays 470, others 428. Uſher 424 years. It was deſtroyed about 586 years before Chriſt.

the original manuſcripts of the law and of the prophetical writings muſt have been removed; and were poſſibly carried to Babylon, except indeed we ſuppoſe, that the part of the Hebrew nation which remained at Jeruſalem, obtained permiſſion, or found means to retain them [L]. Thoſe Hebrews who were diſperſed in the captivity, probably uſed ſuch copies as had been previouſly diſtributed; though Daniel who refers to the law [M], might by his intereſt with the Babyloniſh kings, have procured acceſs to the original, if we ſuppoſe it to have been transferred to Babylon. Within the ſeventy years during which the Jews were detained in captivity, were compoſed the affecting lamentations of Jeremiah, the conſolatory prophecies of Ezekiel, and the hiſtory and prophecies of Daniel. On the acceſſion of Cyrus to the throne of Perſia, the Jews being releaſed from their captivity, returned to Jeruſalem about A. M. 3468, having doubtleſs procured or recovered the original books of the law and of the prophets, with a deſign to place them in the temple, which after much oppoſition from the Samaritans, they rebuilt in about twenty years, being encouraged to perſevere in this pious work, by the exhortations of Haggai and Zechariah; they alſo reſtored the divine worſhip according to the law. About fifty years after the temple was rebuilt, Ezra, who ſince the return from

[L] In the account of the things carried to Babylon, no mention is made of the ſacred books. 2 Kings xxv. 2 Chronicles xxxvi. Jerem. liii.

[M] Dan. ix. 11, 13.

Babylon, had been engaged in reſtoring the Jewiſh church, is related by tradition to have made, in conjunction with the great ſynagogue, a collection of the ſacred writings [N]; and being aſſiſted by the Holy Spirit, he was enabled to diſcriminate what was authentic and divine, and to reject ſuch parts as reſted but on falſe pretenſions; this collection was therefore free from error, and reſcued from all accidental corruptions. It has been maintained, indeed, that as a long reſidence in Chaldea, during which the Jews were diſperſed and ſeparated from each other, had ſo far precluded the uſe of the Hebrew letters, that they were almoſt forgotten and ſuperſeded by thoſe of Chaldea, Ezra, partly in compliance with cuſtom, and partly to differ from the Samaritans, which obnoxious ſect employed the old Hebrew letters, ſubſtituted the Chaldean or ſquare letters, which we now call the Hebrew, for thoſe which prevailed previouſly to the captivity [O], as

[N] Nehem. viii. 1, 3, 9. Joſeph. Lib. I. Cont. Apion. Tract. Megil. in Gemar, cap. iii. Hieron. cont. Helv. cap. 1. Hilar. Prolog. in Pſalm; Auguſt. de Mirac. Sac. Scrip. Lib. II. Iſidor. Orig. Lib. VI. cap. I. Geneb. Chron. p. clxxviii. and ccli. & ad A. M. 3640. Jans. ad Cap. 48. Eccles. Buxtorf, Tiberiad, Cap. xi. Com. in Maſor. Theodor. Præf. in Pſalm; Prid. Connect. Part I. Book v. Dupin Diſſ. Prel.

[O] Some aſſert alſo, that Ezra introduced the points or characters which ſerve to mark the Hebrew vowels; others maintain, that theſe are as ancient as the language; and a third claſs, that they were invented by the doctors of the ſchool of Tiberias,

as we changed our old black letter for the Roman characters. There have, indeed, been ſome diſputes on this ſubject, but this opinion ſeems to be beſt ſupported [P].

To this genuine collection of Ezra, were afterwards annexed his own ſacred writings, as well as thoſe of Nehemiah, and of Malachi. Theſe were probably inſerted into the canon by Simon the Juſt, who is related to have been the laſt of the great ſynagogue [Q], and by this addition was completed the canon of the Old Teſtament, for from Malachi, no prophet aroſe till the time of John the Baptiſt, who, as it were, connected the two covenants, and

Tiberias, generally called the Maſorites, about 500 years after Chriſt, or as ſome ſay later. The Maſorites ſeem to have been a ſucceſſion of critics, profeſſing a traditionary ſcience of reading the ſcripture, as the Cabaliſts did of interpreting it.

[P] This account is founded on a Jewiſh tradition generally received, and is related on the teſtimonies of Euſebius and St. Jerom, but thoſe who maintain that the ſquare were the ancient Hebrew letters, have attempted to invalidate theſe authorities. The canon, however, was certainly compoſed about the time of Ezra, if not by himſelf. Vid. Euſeb. Chron. ad A. M. 4740. Hieron. Præf. ad 2 Reg. Com. in Ezekiel, in Prol. Gal. & Sixt. Senens. Lib. II. Biblioth. Sanct. Morin. Cong. Orat. Alſo Scaliger, Bochart, Caſaubon, Voſſius, Grotius, Walton, and Capellus.

[Q] The great ſynagogue is a term applied by the Jews to a ſucceſſion of Elders, ſuppoſed to have amounted to one hundred and twenty, who had the government of the Jewiſh church after the captivity. They are ſaid to have ſuperintended and cloſed the canon of the ſcriptures. Vid. Prid. Con. An. 292.

of whom Malachi propheſied, that he ſhould precede the great day of the Lord [R].

THIS canon of the Old Teſtament was by the Jews computed to contain twenty-two books [S], a number analogous to that of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, and correſponding with the catalogue of thoſe which are received by our Church as canonical. With the Jews, however, Judges and Ruth were reckoned but as one book; as likewiſe the two books of Samuel, thoſe of Kings and of Chronicles were reſpectively united into ſingle books; Ezra and Nehemiah were alſo joined together, as the prophecies and lamentation of Jeremiah were taken under one head; ſo that if we conſider the twelve minor prophets as they were comprehended in the Jewiſh canon, as one book, the number of the books will be exactly twenty-two. If the Prophets wrote any other books, they are now loſt, but as no more were admitted into the canon, we have reaſon to ſuppoſe, that no more were inſpired, though many other books are mentioned and referred to in the ſcriptures, which having no pretenſions to inſpiration, were never received into the ſacred liſt [T]. Theſe twenty-

[R] Malach. iv. 5.

[S] Joſeph. cont. Apion, Lib. I. Hieron. Prol. Galeat. Sixt. Senens, Lib. I. c. ii. Epiphan. &c.

[T] Orig. Hom. I. in Cant. Auguſt. De Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. cap. xxxviii. Quæſt. 42. in Numb. It has been ſaid, likewiſe, that ſome paſſages are cited by the Evangeliſts, as from the prophetic writings, which are not extant in them, as in Matt. ii. 23, but St. Matthew might here allude to Judges xiii.

twenty-two books have an unqueſtionable title to be conſidered as the genuine and inſpired productions of thoſe authors, to whom they are ſeverally aſſigned. They contain prophecies, and every other intrinſic proof of their divine origin; they were received as authentic by the Hebrews, and pronounced to be inſpired oracles by the Evangelical writers, who cite them without any intimation of defect or corruption. They were likewiſe conſidered as excluſively canonical in the Chriſtian Church, during the four firſt centuries, after which, ſome provincial councils attempted to increaſe the number by ſome apocryphal books, which however, they annexed only as of ſecondary authority, till the council of Trent pronounced them to be equally infallible in doctrine and truth [u].

The Jews divided the ſacred books into three claſſes [x]. The firſt, which they called the law, contained, as was before obſerved, the five books of Moſes. The ſecond originally included thirteen

xiii. 5. or to Iſaiah xi. 1. where according to St. Jerom, "A branch ſhall go out of his root" might be tranſlated, "a Nazarite ſhall grow from his root," or he might refer to the prophetic accounts in general, which had foretold, that Chriſt ſhould be conſecrated to God, as all the Nazarites were. The Evangeliſts uſually cite more according to the ſenſe, than to the words, and they ſometimes perhaps allude to well known traditional prophecies, to "that which was ſpoken by the prophets." See other inſtances in Epheſ. v. 14. 2 Tim. iii. 8. James iv. 5. Jude 14, 15. which refer to paſſages now extant, or to traditional relations. Hieron. de Opt. Gen. Interpr. Vol. I. p. 122.

[u] Preface to the Apocryphal books.

[x] Prolog. to Eccluſ. Philo de Vitâ Contemp. p. 691.

books,

books, which they conſidered as the works of the prophets. The third compriſed four books, called by the Jews, Chetubim, and by the Greeks, Hagiographa; theſe are conceived to have been the Pſalms, and the three books of Solomon [Y]. The ſcriptures were ſo divided in the time of Joſephus [Z], probably without any reſpect to ſuperiority of inſpiration, but for diſtinction, and commodious arrangement. From the time of St. Jerom, the ſecond claſs has been deprived of ſome books [A], which have been thrown into the third claſs, and the Hebrew doctors have invented many fanciful refinements, concerning the nature and degrees of inſpiration, which are to be aſcribed to the books of each claſs reſpectively. They aſſign an higher authority to the books of the two firſt diviſions, though they attribute alſo the writings included in the third claſs, to the ſuggeſtion of the ſacred Spirit [B]. It would be idle to trouble the reader with the diſcuſſion of theſe, and ſuch like rabbinical conceits, and it may be ſufficient here to remark upon this ſubject, that though the ſcripture mentions different modes, by which God communicated his inſtructions to the prophets, and particularly attributes a ſuperior de-

[Y] Sixt. Senen. Bib. Sac. cap. vi. p. 313. and Vitrin. Obſervat. Sac. Lib. VI. cap. vi. p. 313.

[Z] Joſeph. cont. Apion, Lib. I.

[A] Job, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Eſther, 2 Books of Chronicles.

[B] Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. p. 2. ch. xxiv. and Smith on Prophecy, alſo Miſn. Jud. c. iii. n. 5. Bava Bathra, cap. i.

gree

gree of eminence to Moſes, yet that theſe differences, and this diſtinction, however they may affect the dignity of the miniſter employed, cannot be ſuppoſed to increaſe, or to leſſen the certainty of the things revealed. Whatever God condeſcended to communicate to mankind by his ſervants, muſt be equally infallible and true [C], whether derived from immediate converſe with him, from an external voice, or from dreams or viſions, or laſtly from the internal and enlightening influence of the Holy Spirit. The mode of communication, where the agency of Providence is eſtabliſhed, can in no reſpect exalt, or depreciate the intrinſic character of the thing revealed.

Other diviſions, beſides that already mentioned, were afterwards adopted, and the order of the books was ſometimes changed, as deſign or accident might produce a tranſpoſition, but no addition or diminution whatever was permitted to be made among the Jews [D]; " never any man, ſays Joſephus, hath dared to add to, or to diminiſh from, or to alter ought in them [E]; though other books were written, which deſerved not the ſame credit, becauſe there was no certain ſucceſſion of prophets, from the time of Artaxerxes, and it was a maxim, ingrafted into the Jews in their youth, to eſteem theſe writings

[C] 2 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Pet. i. 19, 21.

[D] Hieron. præf. in Lib. Reg. Bava Bathra, cap. i. Maimon. in Tad. Chan. p. 2. f. 95, and R. Gedalias in Schalſch hakkab. f. 67.

[E] Deut. iv. 2. and Joſeph. cont. Apion. Lib. I. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. III. cap. ix. x. Præp. Evangel. Lib. VIII.

as the oracles of God, and remaining conſtant in their veneration, willingly to die for them, if neceſſary." Thus were they conſigned to the reverent acceptance of poſterity, and conſecrated by the approbation, and teſtimony of Chriſt himſelf, who ſtamped as authentic, and as infallibly to be accompliſhed, the law of Moſes, the prophets, and the pſalms [F]; (the pſalms, comprehending under that title, the Hagiographa) [G]; the apoſtles likewiſe confirmed the ſame [H].

Besides the great temple at Jeruſalem, many ſynagogues were founded after the return from the captivity, and furniſhed by the induſtry of the rulers of the church, with copies of this authentic collection of the ſcriptures, ſo that though Antiochus Epiphanes in the perſecution, which he carried on againſt the religion of the Jews, tore in pieces, and afterwards burnt the ſacred original of Ezra, and ſuch copies as he could procure [I]; ſtill, as faithful copies exiſted in all parts, the malevolence of his intention was baffled by God's providence, and Judas Maccabæus, when he had recovered the city,

[F] Matt. v. 17, 18, 39. xxi. 42. xxii. 29. xxvi. 54. Luke xvi. 16. xxiv. 27, 44. John i. 45. v. 39.

[G] Philo de Vit. Contemp. Lib. VI. Joſeph. contra Apion. Lib. I. Hieron. in Prolog. in præf. in Dan. Epiphan. Homil. xxix. cap. 7.

[H] Acts iii. 18. xviii. 28. xxiv. 14. xxvi. 22, 27. xxviii. 23. xxix. 7. Rom. iii. 2. xv. 4. Heb. i. 1. 2 Tim. iii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 6. 2 Peter i. 19. Acts viii. 32. Rom. iv. 3. ix. 17. x. 4.

[I] 1 Macc. i. 57. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XII. cap. 7. Sulpit. Sev. Hiſt. Sac. Lib. II.

and

and purified the temple, procured for it a perfect and entire collection of the ſcriptures, or perhaps depoſited therein, that, which had belonged to his father Mattathias [K], and doubtleſs ſupplied ſuch ſynagogues with freſh copies, as had been plundered during the perſecution. Many of theſe, however, muſt have periſhed with the ſynagogues that were deſtroyed by the armies of Titus, and Veſpaſian, though the religious veneration of the Jews for their ſcriptures, reſcued every copy that could be ſaved from the general deſtruction which overwhelmed their country, as the ſcriptures furniſhed them conſiderable conſolation in all their afflictions. Joſephus himſelf, we are informed, obtained a copy from Titus [L], when the other Jewiſh books were deſtroyed, and the authentic volume, which till this final demolition had been depoſited in the temple, was carried in triumph to Rome, and placed with the purple veils in the temple of Peace [M], ſo that, henceforth, no copy of the Hebrew ſcriptures was preſerved from injury by the vigilance of public guardians, except thoſe which were kept in the ſcattered ſynagogues of foreign and diſperſed Jews [N],

[K] 1 Mac. ii. 48. iii. 48. xii. 9. 2 Mac. ii. 14. viii. 23. xv. 9.

[L] Vide his own Life.

[M] De Bell. Jud. cap. v.

[N] The Jewiſh ſynagogues in all countries were numerous: wherever the apoſtles preached they found them; they were eſtabliſhed by the direction of the rabbins in every place where there were ten perſons of full age and free condition. Vid. Megill, cap. i. ſect. 3. Maimon in Tephill. Lightfoot's Harmony, ſect. 17. Exercit. in St. Matt.

and

and it is from this time, probably, that errors and corruptions crept into the ſacred text. As there was no longer any eſtabliſhed ſtandard of correctneſs, by which the fidelity of different copies could be tried, faults and miſtakes were inſenſibly introduced; the careleſſneſs of tranſcribers occaſioned accidental omiſſions: marginal annotations [o] were adopted into the text; and the reſemblances between different Hebrew letters, of which, many are remarkably ſimilar in form, contributed, with other circumſtances too numerous to be here ſpecified, to produce alterations, and imperfections in the different copies, which, from the difficulty of collating manuſcripts for correction, were neceſſarily perpetuated.

Hence originated thoſe various readings, and occaſional differences which we find in the ſeveral manuſcripts of the Hebrew Bible, and theſe differences muſt have conſiderably multiplied, ſince it was enacted by a conſtitution of the elders, that every man ſhould

[o] The Hebrew Bibles have marginal readings, called keri, which ſignifies, that which is read, (the text is called cetib, that which is written:) theſe marginal variations are by ſome aſcribed to Ezra, but as they are found in his Books, as well as in thoſe which were inſerted in the Canon after his time, they ſeem to be conjectural emendations of corrupted paſſages by later writers, probably by the great ſynagogue, or the Maſorites; theſe words amount to about 1000, and all, except a very few, have been found in the texts of different manuſcripts. Vid. Kennicott Diſſ. Gener. Vitring. Obſervat. Sac. vol. ii. cap. 19. Capellus, Morinus, Walton, Anan. Punct. Rev. Lib. I. cap. v. Buxtorf. Vind. Verit. Heb. Par. ii. c. 4.

poſſeſs

poſſeſs a private copy of the ſcriptures. Fortunately however, it has happened, that theſe differences are ſeldom important in their nature or conſequences, as appears from a collation of thoſe various copies which pious and munificent men have induſtriouſly collected; and it ſhould indeed ſeem to be an eſpecial effect of ſome peculiar providence, that thoſe paſſages which relate to faith and doctrine, thoſe which deſcribe the attributes and perfections of God, and treat concerning our obligations and duty, are in general preſerved uniform, and uncorrupted. Secure in their integrity from the conſiſtent teſtimonies of every copy, we may confidently rely on the inſtructions which they reveal, and ſtedfaſtly adhere to the principles which they inculcate.

THERE could not indeed be any temptation for the Jews deſignedly to corrupt the doctrine of their ſcriptures, before the appearance of the Meſſiah; during the greater part of which time it was watched over by the prophets, and by different ſects: and had ſuch a deſign prevailed ſince the birth of Chriſt, the Jews would not have overlooked thoſe paſſages which ſo ſtrongly authenticate our Saviour's

[P] When the Hebrew text differs from the Greek, it is ſometimes more unfavourable to the Jewiſh opinions, as in Pſalm ii. 12. The paſſage in the 16th verſe of the xxiid Pſalm, which has been produced as a concerted alteration, is certainly only corrupted by accident, for the copies which differing from the Septuagint, inſtead of כארו caaru, "they pierced" my hands and feet, read כארי caari, "as a lion" my hands and my feet, can hardly be conceived to have been intentionally

Saviour's pretenſions [P]; indeed ſuch a deſign muſt then have been fruitleſs, ſince it could not be general, and it muſt have been liable to immediate detection; for as chriſtianity was built on the foundation of the Old Teſtament, and appealed to the Hebrew ſcriptures for its ſupport, wherever the goſpel was received, the law and the prophets were called into notice and eſteem, and preſerved with as much care and vigilance as prevailed among the Jews; and when the chriſtian converts were commanded under the Dioclefian perſecution, to ſurrender them, they ſtigmatized ſuch as complied with the requiſition, as betrayers [Q]. Copies then muſt have multiplied by increaſing veneration, and however trivial inaccuracies might proportionably prevail, contrived alteration muſt have become more impracticable. Thus every circumſtance ſeems to have conſpired to preſerve the integrity of the ſcriptures free from a ſuſpicion of intended corruption, or of change in any eſſential point. The jealous care with which they were preſerved in the tabernacle, and in the temple, being not more calculated to ſecure their integrity, than that reverence which afterwards diſplayed itſelf in the diſperſed ſynagogues, and in the churches conſecrated to the chriſtian faith; and hence we find in the ſcriptures only ſuch corruptions as might have

ally altered to nonſenſe, nor is it probable that two verſes ſhould have been deſignedly omitted from ch. xv. of Joſhua, merely becauſe they deſcribe, as in the Septuagint, that Bethlehem was in the territory of Judah, a circumſtance otherwiſe well known.

[Q] Traditores.

been

been accidentally produced [R]. The moſt ancient Hebrew manuſcripts that modern enquiry hath ever been able to procure, do not uſually ſeem to be above 600, or 700 years old, and none exceed the age of 900; theſe however have been copied from others more ancient. In proportion to their antiquity, they are found to be more free from corruptions [S], and for the reaſon before aſſigned; that theſe corruptions are but the natural effects of frequent tranſcription, the conſequence of careleſs haſte, or caſual inadvertency. In important points, almoſt all, though collected at different times, and in different places, correſpond, or are eaſily reconcileable with each other. But the purity of the ſacred volume is eſtabliſhed, not merely by the general coincidence of the Hebrew copies, it is ſtill farther proved beyond a poſſibility of ſuſpicion, by the agreement which ſubſiſts between the Hebrew, and the Samaritan Pentateuch [T], and by the correſpondence

[R] See Morinus, Capellus, Grotius, and Kennicott's Bible. The precepts of ſcripture are generally repeated in the different Books, ſo that errors in theſe muſt be immediately detected; the miſtakes are chiefly in proper names, and numbers; in the latter often occaſioned by the uſe of letters for numbers. Irenæus, Beza, &c.

[S] The beſt are thoſe copied by the Jews of Spain: thoſe by the Jews of Germany are leſs correct.

[T] The Samaritans, whether the deſcendants of the ten tribes, who ſeceded under the reign of Rehoboam, or of the colony, ſaid to have been brought from Cuth, or other parts of Aſſyria, (2 Kings xvii. 24.) profeſſed the Hebrew religion,

ence preſerved in the Septuagint verſion of the Old Teſtament, (as collected by Ezra) with the original Hebrew.

The Samaritan Pentateuch is a copy of the Hebrew original, and according to the moſt general, and beſt ſupported opinion, written in the old Hebrew or Phœnician characters [u]. Though this Samaritan copy has ſome variations, tranſpoſitions, and additions, which render it different in ſome reſpects from the Hebrew manuſcripts, yet theſe are never of ſuch a nature as to impeach the integrity of the ſcrip-

and had a Temple, a Prieſt, and a Pentateuch. When that Pentateuch was copied, is uncertain; ſome ſay at the time of their firſt revolt; others contend that it was copied from Ezra's collection, as it contains ſome interpolations aſcribed to him. As the Samaritans rejected the regulations eſtabliſhed by Joſhua, as alſo the authority of the Hebrew prieſthood, they diſregarded not only the Books which were written ſubſequently to the revolt of the ten tribes, and which were addreſſed more particularly to the kingdom of Judah, but alſo thoſe that were written previouſly to the diviſion of the two kingdoms, as the Books of Joſhua, of Samuel, of David, and of Solomon. There is ſtill a remainder of the Samaritans who have their high prieſt, ſaid to be of the race of Aaron, and who offer up their ſacrifice upon Mount Gerizim to this day. The chief part of this ſect reſide at Sichem, which was afterwards called Flavia Neapolis, and now Naplouſa. They have ſynagogues in other parts of Paleſtine, and are numerous in Syria, and Egypt, and ſome of them are diſperſed in the north of Europe, vid. Joſeph. Ant. Lib. II. Prid. Con. Part I. Book vi. Benjamin Itiner. Gaſſen. in Vita. Piereſcii, and Hotting. Bib. Critic. Scalig. de Emend. Temp.

[u] Scaliger. Voſſius, Capellus. Univer. Hiſt. Book I. ch. vii. Prid. Con. Part I. Book vi.

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ture doctrine, or to leſſen our confidence in the purity of the Hebrew copies; for if we except ſome chronological variations, which are perhaps not utterly irreconcileable, and a deſigned alteration diſcovered in the Samaritan Pentateuch, that was manifeſtly inſerted to ſupport an opinion, that Mount Gerizim [x] was the place which God had choſen for his temple, we ſhall find that the variations of this copy are not more than might reaſonably be expected from frequent tranſcription during a period of 2000 years [y]; for ſo long a time had elapſed from the apoſtacy of Manaſſeh [z], to the introduction of this copy into Europe.

[x] Deut. xxvii. 4. They have put Gerizim inſtead of Ebal into this verſe.

[y] The fathers are ſuppoſed to have had a Greek tranſlation of the Samaritan Pentateuch, but from the ſixth, to the ſeventeenth century, no mention is made of the Samaritan Pentateuch: Scaliger firſt lamented, that no one had procured a copy of the original. In conſequence of this hint, the learned Uſher obtained two or three copies of it by means of Sir Thomas Davis, then at Aleppo; and not long after, Sancius Harley, a prieſt of the Oratory of Paris, brought home another, which he depoſited in the library of his Order at Paris, from which copy Morinus publiſhed it in the Paris Polyglot. Vid. Prid. Con. Part I. Book vi. The Samaritans have likewiſe a tranſlation of this Pentateuch into the language vulgarly ſpoken among them, their language being now ſo corrupted by foreign innovations, as to be very different from the original Samaritan. This tranſlation is publiſhed in the Paris and London Polyglots, and is ſo literal, that Morinus, and Walton thought, that one verſion would ſerve for both, only noting the variations. Vid. Prid. Con. Part II. Lib. I.

[z] The ſon-in-law of Sanballat, who was compelled by Nehemiah to quit Jeruſalem, and who carried away a copy of

This common agreement is therefore a ſtriking proof of the general integrity of the different copies, and we ſhall be ſtill farther convinced, that the ſacred volume has preſerved its genuine purity in every important point, if we conſider how little the Septuagint verſion of the ſcriptures differs from the Hebrew copies, notwithſtanding the many ages that have elapſed ſince the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, the king of Egypt, who was the ſecond monarch of the Macedonian race, about 280 years before Chriſt, and under whoſe reign this tranſlation was made into Greek. It has been maintained indeed by ſome learned men, that only the Pentateuch was tranſlated at firſt, and that the other books [A] were rendered into Greek ſucceſſively at different times; however this may have been, they were all tranſlated long before the birth of Chriſt [B]. This verſion has no important variations from the

the law to Samaria. He is called Manaſſeh by Joſephus. Vid. Nehem. xiii. 28. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XI. cap. 7.

[A] Euſeb. Demonſt. Evang. Lib. III. cap. ult. Hody de Bibl. Text. Origen. &c.

[B] The Septuagint was probably the firſt verſion into the Greek, though ſome have contended that there was a previous tranſlation into that language, made before Alexander's expedition. Vid. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. cap. xi. Huet. Prop. IV. cap. xii. ſect. 3. The account of the Septuagint tranſlation, attributed to Ariſtæas, is loaded with ſo many fabulous circumſtances, that it deſerves but little credit, though repeated by Philo, Joſephus, and other writers. Vid. Ariſtæas Hiſt. 70. Interp. Philo in Vit. Moſ. Lib. II. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XII. cap. 2. Irenæ. Lib. III. cap. 25. The truth ſeems to be, that a verſion

the Hebrew, except in ſome chronological accounts, occaſioned probably by the careleſſneſs of the copyiſts [c]. It was uſed in all thoſe countries where Alexander had eſtabliſhed the Grecian language, and ſeems to have been admitted into the Jewiſh ſynagogues in Judæa, and even at Jeruſalem, where that language prevailed; and the Septuagint was certainly moſt uſed there in the time of our Saviour, for the citations in the New Teſtament from the Old, ſeem to have been made according to that verſion [d]. At that

ſion was begun in the reign of Ptolemy, and perhaps finiſhed at different times for the uſe of the Alexandrian Jews, but before the time that the Book of Eccleſiaſticus was written, and conſequently at leaſt two centuries before Chriſt. Vid. Prolog. to Ecclus. Hody de Bibl. Text. Lib. II. cap. viii. Comp. 2 Sam. xxii. with Pſalm xviii. Other tranſlations into Greek were afterwards made by Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus. Vid. Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. I, V. Euſeb. Præp. Evan. c. vi. Prid. Con. Part II. Book i.

[c] In the vth and xith ch. of Geneſis, every Patriarch is ſaid to have lived 100 years longer, according to the Septuagint, than in the Hebrew, except Jared, and Methuſalem.

[d] St. Jerom was of opinion, that the evangelical writers cited from the Septuagint when it did not differ from the Hebrew, but that they had recourſe to the original when there was any difference; but the inſtances which he has produced, do not prove, that they referred to the Hebrew; and the evangeliſts ſometimes cite from the Septuagint when it differs from the Hebrew, as in Rom. x. 18. from Pſalm xix. 4. Rom. xv. 12. from Iſaiah xi. 10. In the time of Chriſt, the original and the tranſlation agreed more exactly than they now do, as many corruptions muſt have been ſubſequent to that period:

that period then it was unqueſtionably an authentic copy of the inſpired books, or it would not have received the ſanction of our Saviour, and of his apoſtles; and though ſince that time it has been rejected by the Jews on account of the eſtimation in which it was held by the Chriſtians, yet was it for the two firſt centuries excluſively uſed, and has ever ſince been held in great veneration by the Chriſtian church, as a very faithful, though not a literal verſion.

Thus does the general coincidence between the Hebrew copies, the Samaritan Pentateuch, and the Septuagint verſion of the Old Teſtament, demonſtrate the unaltered integrity of the ſcriptures in important points, as we now poſſeſs them, and this integrity is

it is therefore in ſome degree uncertain, whether the citations are made from the Hebrew, or from the Septuagint, though they appear indeed, to be made chiefly from the latter, except perhaps by St. Matthew, who probably writing in Hebrew, might cite from the Hebrew. Vid. Hieron. adv. Ruffin. Mede's Works, p. 785. Dr. Brett imagines that our Saviour read out of a Targum when he read the leſſon in the ſynagogue. Vid. Luke iv. 18. comp. with Iſaiah lxi. 1. and that he cited a paraphraſe on the croſs. Vid. Matt. xxvii. 46. for Sabacthani is found only in the Chaldaic tongue, and in the Hebrew it is עזבתני yazabtani. Chriſt and the Apoſtles probably cited what was moſt known to the Jews, the ſenſe being the ſame, whether from Original, Verſion, or Paraphraſe. The language ſpoken by the Jews in our Saviour's time was the Hebrew mixed with the Chaldaic, and Syriac, which dialects compoſe likewiſe the baſis of the modern Hebrew; Greek however was generally underſtood. Vid. Brett's Diſſert. on the ancient verſion of the Bible, Blair's Lectures, &c.

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ſtill farther confirmed by the conformity which ſubſiſts between thoſe various tranſlations of the Bible into different languages, which have been performed ſince the time of our Saviour [E]. It appears therefore that from the time of their firſt inſpiration, to the preſent day, the ſacred writings have been diſperſed into ſo many different hands, that no poſſible opportunity could be furniſhed for confederate corruption, and every deſigned alteration muſt immediately have been detected. The firſt Hebrew Bibles were publiſhed towards the concluſion of the fifteenth century, by the Jews of Italy [F]. Many were afterwards publiſhed

[E] The general integrity of the text is likewiſe confirmed by the evidence of the Chaldee paraphraſes, which are called targums or verſions; theſe were tranſlations of the Old Teſtament from the Hebrew into Chaldee, for the benefit of thoſe who had forgotten the Hebrew after the captivity; vid. Nehem. viii. 8. The two moſt ancient, and authentic, are that of Onkelos on the Law, and that of Jonathan on the Prophets; theſe were probably made ſoon after the captivity, or at leaſt before the time of Chriſt, but they are blended with more modern comments. The other targums are of much later date. The targums are printed in the ſecond edition of the Hebrew Bible, publiſhed at Baſil, by Buxtorf the Father, in 1610.

[F] The Hebrew Bible, according to Houbigant, (Proleg. p. 94, 96,) was firſt printed by R. Jacob ben Chaim, but Kennicott ſays, that this was not publiſhed till 1528, and that therefore it was ſubſequent to that reviſed by Felix Pratenſis, publiſhed at Venice, 1517. There is ſtill extant in Eton Library, a vellum copy of the Chetubim, or Hagiographa, printed according to Dr. Pellet's account at Naples, in 1487, and probably deſigned as a ſecond or third part to the edition of the prophets, printed, according to Le Long, at Soncino, in 1486.

liſhed at Venice, Antwerp, and Amſterdam, as well as in other places, which have their reſpective merits and defects; but perhaps, the moſt important edition, that, which does honour to our country, is the celebrated work of the late Dr. Kennicott, who, a few years ſince, publiſhed his Bible, containing the very accurate text of Vander Hooght, with the variations of near 700 different manuſcripts, collected at a great expence, and collated with great labour and care [G], together with the variations of numberleſs Samaritan manuſcripts, compared with the Samaritan text, as publiſhed in the London Polyglot [H].

From

See Le Long and Wolfius, Bibliot. Heb. 2. 397. This was followed by many others. See Kennicott's Hiſt. of the Heb. Text. 6th period. That of Vander Hooght, publiſhed at Amſterdam in 1705, and that of Houbigant, publiſhed in 1753, are the moſt diſtinguiſhed and correct. The firſt Bible that ever was printed, was a Latin Bible, publiſhed at Mentz, about A. D. 1452. A copy of a ſecond or third edition of this printed at Mentz in 1462, with metal types, by John Fauſt, (whom ſome ſuppoſe to have been the firſt printer) and Peter Schaffer, is in the king of France's Library, and a firſt volume of this edition is in the Bodleian Library, and another firſt volume was brought to England in the Pinelli collection, together with a laſt volume of one which had the appearance of being ſtill more ancient; it had no date. There certainly were two Bibles publiſhed before 1462, vid. Pinelli Catalogue. Michael Maittaire, Ann. Typogr. T. 1. p. 272. Catalog. Hiſtorico-Critic. Biblioth. Inſtruct. Vol. Theol. p. 32. and 14 Vol. of Acad. des Inſcrip. p. 238.

[G] The learned M. de Roſſi has ſince publiſhed the variations of many more, which he collated.

[H] The word Polyglot is derived from Πολυς much, and γλωτ̃α a tongue; it means a Bible with the texts of ſeveral languages;

From the earlieſt ages of the primitive church, tranſlations have been made into various languages [I]; but it would be foreign from the deſign of this introduction to enter into a particular account of the different verſions that have been made, at different times, into other languages: we are concerned only with our Engliſh tranſlation, of which it may be neceſſary to give ſome account, after we ſhall have taken a ſhort view of the preceding verſions, which have been made into the language of this country.

It is poſſible that the firſt inhabitants of Britain, who are ſaid to have been converted to chriſtianity, had at leaſt ſome of the ſcriptures in their own tongue [K]; but the earlieſt tranſlations, of which we have any account in our hiſtory, are thoſe of the Saxon writers, who enabled their countrymen to read the ſcriptures in their own language. It appears from writers contemporary with Adelm, or Aldhelm, that there was then extant, a tranſlation of the ſcriptures, or of a part of them at leaſt, in the vulgar tongue [L]; and it is known that Adelm, who was the firſt biſhop of Sherborne, tranſlated the Pſalter into the

languages; there are Polyglots publiſhed in Spain, at Antwerp, at Paris, and London.

[I] Theodor. ad Græc. Infid. Serm. 5. Euſeb. Dem. Evan. Lib. III. c. ult. Uſſer. Hiſt. Dogm. de Script. & Sac. Vernac.

[K] M. Parker. de Antiq. Ecc. Brit. Teſt. Uſh. de Primord. Eccles. Britan.

[L] The Saxon homilies exhort the people to read the ſcriptures. Vid. alſo Adelm. de Virginit. & Bede, Lib. III. cap. 5. ab Ann. 634.

Saxon

Saxon tongue, about A. D. 706. Ingulphus [M] ſpeaks of a Pſalter of St. Guthlack, who was a contemporary of Adelm, and the firſt Saxon anchorite, and who influenced Ethelbald, king of Mercia, to found the monaſtery of Croyland, and this Pſalter in the Latin tongue, Lambert profeſſes to have ſeen, [N] among the records belonging to Croyland [O]. This was ſoon followed by the Latin, and Saxon tranſlations of the Pſalter, and Goſpel, which indeed frequently appeared, eſpecially upon any change in the language.

The Pſalter and the Goſpel [P], or as ſome ſay, all the books of the Bible [Q], were tranſlated into the Anglo-Saxon, towards the beginning of the

[M] Ingulf. Cent. I. c. 85.

[N] Lambert in Reſpon. ad Art. 26, Epiſ.

[O] There is alſo in the public library at Cambridge, a tranſlation of the Pſalms into Latin and Engliſh, and another old Latin tranſlation with an interlineary Saxon verſion was in the Cotton Library, in the ſame character with the charter of King Ethelbald, which is dated at A. D. 736. Vid. Uſſer. Hiſt. Dogmat, p. 104. Uſher informs us, that Mr. Robert Bowyer was in poſſeſſion of a Saxon tranſlation of the Evangeliſts, by Ecbert, (who is called alſo Ekfrid, Eadfrid, and Eckfrid, Biſhop of Landisfern,) who died A. D. 721. vid. Uſſer, Hiſt. Dogm. c. 5. Egbert wrote alſo, a copy of the Evangeliſts in Latin, to which, Aldred a prieſt, added a Saxon interlineary tranſlation, which was in the Cotton Library, Vid. Wharton, Anglia Sac. Pars I. p. 695. Fox, by the encouragement of Matthew Parker, publiſhed in 1571, a Saxon verſion of the Evangeliſts, made from the Vulgate, before it was reviſed by St. Jerom, of which the author is unknown.

[P] Vid. Bale. [Q] Fox, and Caius de Ant. Cantab. Lib. I.

eighth

eighth century, by venerable Bede, who is related to have finiſhed the laſt chapter of the goſpel as he expired [R].

THE whole Bible was tranſlated into the Anglo-Saxon, by order of king Alfred. He undertook the verſion of the Pſalms himſelf, but did not live to complete it. Another Anglo-Saxon verſion appears to have been made ſoon after [S].

SEVERAL books of the Old Teſtament were tranſlated into the Anglo-Saxon, by Elfred or Elfric, Abbot of Malmeſbury, and afterwards A. D. 995. Archbiſhop of Canterbury. The Pentateuch, Joſhua, and Judges, of this tranſlation were preſerved in the Cotton library, and publiſhed at Oxford in 1699, by Edmund Thwaites [T].

ONE of the firſt attempts at a tranſlation into the Engliſh language, as ſpoken after the conqueſt, appears to have been made by Richard Rolle, an Hermit of Hampole in Yorkſhire, who tranſlated, and wrote a gloſs upon the Pſalter, and a metrical paraphraſe of the Book of Job. He died A. D. 1349.

A COMPLETE tranſlation of the whole Bible, including the apocryphal books, was ſoon afterwards

[R] Fox ſays, that he tranſlated the goſpel of St. John a ſecond time, but Cuthbert, his ſcholar, tells us, that he finiſhed at John vi. 9.

[S] This was publiſhed with a Latin interlineary text, by John Spelman, in 1640. Dr. Brett ſuppoſes this to have been Alfred's Pſalter. There is another interlineary Pſalter in the library at Lambeth, apparently of a later period. Spelman publiſhed, with his Pſalter, the various readings of four manuſcripts.

[T] Le Long. Calmet. & Lewis Hiſt. of Tranſlat.

performed

performed by John Wickliff [u]. It was a literal verſion, made from Latin, with the prologues of St. Jerom, to the books of the New Teſtament, and appeared between A. D. 1360 and 1380. The New Teſtament of this tranſlation, which is ſtill extant in many manuſcripts, was publiſhed by Lewis in 1731. Some writers have conceived that an Engliſh tranſlation was made before the time of Wickliff [x], and there are ſome copies of an Engliſh tranſlation at Oxford [y], which Uſher aſſigns to an earlier period; but it is probable that theſe may be genuine, or corrected copies of Wickliff's tranſlation. Lewis is of opinion, that John Treviſa, who is by ſome related to have made an entire Engliſh verſion of the ſcriptures about 1387,

[u] Huſſ. Replicat. con. T. Stokes, Arund. Conſtit. Lynwood's Gloſſary, &c. The New Teſtament of Wickliffe's verſion ſold for four marks and forty pence, as appears from the regiſter of W. Alnewich, Biſhop of Norwich, 1429, as quoted by Fox. Vid. James, Corrupt. of Fathers, p. 277. Fox's preface to Saxon Goſpels, A. D. 1571.

[x] Dr. James was of this opinion; ſee Corrupt. Fathers, p. 225. Biſhop Bonner profeſſes to have ſeen one tranſlated above eighty years before that of Wickliffe: ſo little, however, were the ſcriptures uſed in the time of Wickliffe, that ſome ſecular prieſts of Armagh, who were ſent by Archbiſhop Fitzralph, (the tranſlator of the Bible into Iriſh) to ſtudy divinity at Oxford, about A. D. 1357, were obliged to return, becauſe they could no where find a Latin Bible. The Clergy were then ſeldom able to read Latin. See Fox's Extracts from Longland's Regiſter.

[y] There is a copy of the Old Teſtament of this tranſlation in the Bodleian Library, one at Queen's College, and one at Lambeth; and of the New Teſtament, one in the Bodleian, and two at Cambridge, in Sydney, and Magdalen Colleges.

did

did in fact only paint a few ſentences on the chapel walls of Berkeley Caſtle, and interſperſe a few verſes in his writings [z], with ſome variations from the received tranſlation. It is however highly probable that others beſide Wickliff, undertook this important work, and tranſlated at leaſt ſome parts of the ſcriptures. Hitherto tranſlations were made only from the Italic verſion, or from that of St. Jerom.

GREAT objections were, however, made to theſe and all tranſlations, as promoting a too general, and promiſcuous uſe of the ſcriptures, which was conceived to be productive of evil conſequences, and Wickliff's Bible, particularly as it was judged to be an unfaithful tranſlation, was condemned to be burnt. In the time of Richard the Second, a bill was brought into the Houſe of Lords, A. D. 1390, to prohibit the uſe of Engliſh Bibles. The bill, however, being ſtrongly reprobated, and oppoſed by John Duke of Lancaſter [A] was rejected; but about A. D. 1408, Arundel, Archbiſhop of Canterbury, decreed in a convocation of the clergy at Oxford, that no unauthorized perſon ſhould tranſlate any text of ſcripture into Engliſh, or any other language by way of book, and that no tranſlation made either in, or ſince Wickliff's time ſhould be read, till approved by the

[z] Lewis Hiſt. of Tranſlations.

[A] Uſher, Parker, Linwood, and Collier. The Duke is related to have ſaid, "We will not be the dregs of all, ſeeing other nations have the law of God, which is the law of our faith, written in their own language." Vid. Fox's pref. to Saxon goſpel, A. D. 1571. Uſher de Script. & Sacr. Vern.

biſhop

biſhop of the dioceſe, or in a provincial council. This decree was enforced by great perſecutions, and as about the ſame time Pope Alexander the fifth condemned all tranſlations into the vulgar tongue, they were as much as it was poſſible, ſuppreſſed till the reformation.

It appears, indeed, from our biſhops regiſters, that in conſequence of Arundel's commiſſion, ſeveral perſons were burnt, on refuſing to abjure their principles, for having read the New Teſtament, and the Ten Commandments, in Wickliff's tranſlation [B]. In the reign of Henry VIII. whoſe violent paſſions were providentially rendered conducive to the reformation in this country, William Tyndal, or as he was otherwiſe called, Hickins [C], having left the kingdom on account of his religious principles, tranſlated at Antwerp, by the aſſiſtance of John Fry, or Fryth, and William Roye, the New Teſtament from

[B] At that time the people were ſo little acquainted with the ſcriptures, and ſo ignorant even of the language in which they were originally written, that upon the appearance of printed editions of the ſcriptures in the Hebrew and Greek originals, ſome of the more illiterate Monks declaimed from the pulpits, that "there was now a new language diſcovered called Greek, of which people ſhould beware, ſince it was that which produced all hereſies: that in this language was come forth a book called the New Teſtament, which was now in every body's hands, and was full of thorns and briers. And there had alſo another language now ſtarted up, which they called Hebrew, and that they who learnt it were turned Hebrews." Vid. Hody de Bibl. Text. p. 465. Eraſm. Epiſt. Lib. XXXI. No. 42. edit. 1642.

[C] Hiſt. & Antiq. Oxon. Lib. II. p. 375. vol. ii.

the

the Greek, and printed it in octavo, in 1526 [D]. The written copies of Wickliff's tranſlation had been long known, but this was the firſt time that any part of the ſcriptures was printed in Engliſh. It appeared at Hamborough, or Antwerp, and was diſperſed at London, and Oxford. Wolſey, and the biſhops publiſhed prohibitions, and injunctions againſt it as falſe, and heretical. Tonſtal, biſhop of London, and Sir Thomas More, bought up almoſt the whole impreſſion, and burnt it at St. Paul's Croſs, which, whether or not deſigned to ſerve Tyndal [E], did moſt certainly aſſiſt him in the continuance of his deſigns [F]. The venders of Tyndal's work were condemned by the ſtar-chamber to ride with their faces to the horſes tails, with papers on their heads, and with the books which they had diſperſed tied about them, to the ſtandard in Cheapſide, and they themſelves were compelled to throw them into the fire, and were afterwards amerced by a conſiderable fine [G]. The clergy now profeſſed an intention of publiſhing the New Teſtament themſelves, and a pro-

[D] Fox's Acts. Uſher de Script. p. 187. Joye's Apology.

[E] Jortin's Life of Eraſ. Collier's Eccleſ. Hiſt. vol. ii. p. 22. Sir Thomas More's Engl. Works, vol. ii. p. 369. The Dutch editions were ſoon publiſhed, and diſperſed at a cheap rate, at about thirteen pence each. The Engliſh Books were ſold for about 3s. 6d. Three editions were ſold before 1530. Thus were eyes opened to the abuſes of popery.

[F] Sir Thomas More objected to tranſlations in general, and particularly conſidered Tyndal's as erroneous, eſpecially in matters of church government. Vid. Spelman's Papers. Burnet, vol. i. b. 2. p. 160.

[G] Hall, Henry VIII. Fuller, &c.

clamation

clamation was iſſued againſt Tyndal's work; but before the appearance of this proclamation, Tyndal, by the help of Miles Coverdale, had tranſlated the Pentateuch, which was printed at Hamburgh, in ſmall octavo, in 1530 [H]. In the ſame year he publiſhed a corrected tranſlation of the New Teſtament; and in 1531, a tranſlation of Jonah. As he had but little knowledge of the Hebrew, he probably tranſlated from the Latin, and his work had great merit, conſidering the diſadvantages under which he laboured [I]. His prefaces, which reflected on the biſhops and clergy, were chiefly complained of, though eagerly read by the people; and provoked Henry, at the inſtigation of his miniſters, to procure that he ſhould be ſeized in Flanders, where he was afterwards ſtrangled, and his body was burnt.

In 1535, Miles Coverdale publiſhed a tranſlation of the whole Bible, which, as ſome have ſuppoſed, was printed at Zurich. It was dedicated to the king, probably by permiſſion, though Tyndal was now in

[H] Mr. Thoreſby ſpeaks of a copy printed at Marpurg, in Heſſe, by Hans Luft, in 1530. Vid. Ducat. Leod. Lewis ſays, that Tyndal tranſlated this Pentateuch from the Hebrew, Vid. Hiſt. Tranſl. p. 70.

[I] The tranſlation of the Pentateuch was finiſhed in 1528; but Tyndal being ſhipwrecked in his voyage to Hamburgh, loſt all his papers, and was obliged to begin his work again. He was ſtrangled and burnt near Felford Caſtle, about eighteen miles from Antwerp, praying that God would open the king of England's eyes. Vid. Fox's Martyrs. He received only 14s. Flemiſh for his work.

priſon

priſon for his work. Coverdale ſtiled it a ſpecial tranſlation, and it paſſed under his name; but it is ſuppoſed to have contained much of Tyndal's labours, though none of his prologues, or notes [K].

When the papal reſtrictions were no longer reſpected in this country, it was ſtrenuouſly urged, that if Tyndal's tranſlation were erroneous, a new one ſhould be made; and Cranmer had ſufficient intereſt in convocation, in 1535, to obtain, that a petition ſhould be made to the king for that purpoſe. Henry, influenced partly by argument, and partly by the intereſt with Queen Anne [L] had in his affections, commanded that it ſhould be immediately ſet about. Cranmer began with the New Teſtament, aſſigning a portion of the tranſlation to be reviſed by each biſhop. But the refuſal of Stokeſly, Biſhop of London, to correct his portion, appears to have put a ſtop to the work at preſent. In 1536, Cromwell directed, in his injunctions to the clergy, "that every parſon or proprietary of a church, ſhould provide a bible in Latin and Engliſh, to be laid in the choir for every one to read at his pleaſure."

In 1537 was publiſhed a folio edition of the bible, which was called Matthews's Bible, of Tyndal's and Rogers's tranſlation; it was printed by Grafton, and Whitchurch, at Hamborough [M]. Tyndal is ſaid to have tranſlated to the end of Chronicles, or, as

[K] This was reprinted in large quarto in 1550, and again with a new title in 1553.

[L] Ann Boleyn.

[M] The 1500 copies coſt 500l. then a large ſum.

ſome ſtate, of Nehemiah, if not all the canonical books both of the Old and New Teſtament [N], and Rogers completed the reſt, partly from Coverdale's tranſlation. He had compared it with the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin Bibles, and inſerted prefaces and notes from Luther. As the name of Tyndal, who had been burnt for an heretic, was now become in ſome degree obnoxious, Rogers publiſhed it under the feigned name of Matthews. It was dedicated, and preſented at Cranmer's requeſt, by Cromwell, to the king, who gave his aſſent that it ſhould be printed in England, and generally read; and notwithſtanding the oppoſition of the clergy, the book was received by the publick with great joy.

ANOTHER edition was afterwards prepared, collected, and collated with the original, by Miles Coverdale; and Grafton and Whitchurch obtained leave to publiſh it at Paris on account of the cheapneſs and ſuperiority of the paper. But notwithſtanding the French King's licence, the Inquiſition in 1538 obliged the printers to fly as heretics, and very few of the impreſſions could be reſcued from the flames [O]. But the preſſes, and other printing appurtenances, being afterwards procured and brought to London, the bible was publiſhed there in 1539 [P] by the King's authority. This was called the

[N] It certainly contained this tranſlation of Jonah. See More's Confut. of Tyndal's Anſwer, 1532; and others tranſlated different parts.

[O] A few that an officer of the inquiſition had ſold as waſte paper, were recovered. The impreſſion conſiſted of 2500.

[P] Strype's Life of Cranmer, p. 444.

Bible

Bible in the great or large volume. It was publiſhed in folio, and had a frontiſpiece before it, deſigned by Holbein; but neither Coverdale's, nor Cranmer's preface, nor Tyndal's notes; only an account of the ſucceſſion of the Kings of Judah, and directions in what manner the Old Teſtament ſhould be read [q]. In this edition theſe paſſages in the Latin, which were not to be found in the original, were printed in a ſmall letter, as was alſo the controverted Text in St. John's Epiſtle. It was objected to by the Biſhops as faulty; but as they admitted that it contained no hereſies, the King ſaid, "then in God's name let it go abroad among my people." The epiſtles, goſpels, and pſalms, of this tranſlation, which were inſerted into our Liturgy when compiled, and afterwards reviſed, in the reign of Edward the Sixth, were retained in it till the reſtoration of Charles the Second, when the goſpels and epiſtles were changed for thoſe of King James's tranſlation. The old pſalter, however, was retained, and is ſtill read as excellent, and familiar by long uſe. An order was ſoon afterwards iſſued out, that every church ſhould be furniſhed with one of theſe Bibles.

In 1539, a ſecond or third edition of this was reviſed, and publiſhed by Richard Taverner, which had many marginal notes of Matthews's Bible; and this

[q] This edition, as well as Matthews's Bible, is divided into five tomes. The apocryphal books, which are contained in the fourth of theſe diviſions, are improperly intitled the books of Hagiographa, as ſome of them are called in a ſecondary ſenſe, or perhaps by corruption, by St. Jerom. Vid. Hieron. præf. in Job. Reinhold's Prælect. and James's Corrupt. of Fathers, Par. II. p. 22.

was followed by other editions. In 1540, appeared a very improved edition, corrected by Archbiſhop Cranmer. It contained a judicious preface, written by him, and was called Cranmer's Bible, or the Bible of the greater volume. It was republiſhed in 1541, and countenanced by authority, and a proclamation was iſſued, that every pariſh church which was yet unprovided ſhould procure it, under a penalty, if neglected, of 40s. per month [R]. The Romiſh Biſhops ſtill continued their endeavours, in oppoſition to Cranmer, and attempted to corrupt the ſubſequent editions by a multiplication of Latin words [S]; and though Cranmer obtained an order that the Bible ſhould be examined by both univerſities, it appears not to have been put in execution.

In 1542, an act of Parliament was obtained by the adverſaries of tranſlations, condemning Tyndal's Bible, and the prefaces and notes of all other editions [T], and prohibiting their peruſal in publick, under pain of impriſonment. Cranmer procured an indulgence for the higher ranks to read them in private. The uſe of the ſcriptures being very much abuſed, the interdiction was continued, and confirmed during Henry's reign.

In the ſhort reign of Edward the Sixth, all perſons were allowed the uſe of tranſlations; and new edi-

[R] It was publiſhed in folio; the price was fixed at 10s. unbound, and 12s. bound; ſix were placed in St. Paul's church by Biſhop Bonner.

[S] Matt. Parker. Antiq. Lewis, p. 146.

[T] See an act for the advancement of true Religion, An. 34. Henry VIII.

tions

tions of Taverner's and of Matthews's Bibles [u] were publiſhed, and the Bible of the larger volume was ordered to be procured for churches [x]. Every eccleſiaſtical perſon under the degree of Bachelor of Divinity, was enjoined to provide a New Teſtament in Latin and Engliſh, with the paraphraſe of Eraſmus; and Gardiner, Biſhop of Wincheſter, was committed to the Fleet for refuſing compliance with theſe meaſures, and perſiſting in his opinions, he was at length deprived. It was ordered alſo, that the epiſtle and goſpel ſhould be read at high maſs on Sundays and Holidays, and a chapter of the New Teſtament in the morning, and of the Old at evening ſong.

In Mary's reign, different principles prevailed: all books which were conſidered as heretical, as thoſe containing the Common Prayer, and ſuſpected copies of the Bible, were condemned. The Goſpellers, as they were then called, fled abroad, and a new tranſlation of the ſcriptures into Engliſh, appeared at Geneva, of which the New Teſtament was publiſhed

[u] One of Taverner's in 1549, and one of Matthews's in 1551. Eleven impreſſions of the whole Engliſh Bible, and ſix of the New Teſtament, were publiſhed: ſome were alſo reprinted from Tyndal's, Coverdale's, and Cranmer's editions. Vid. Fuller and Lewis.

[x] Theſe were to be procured at the expence of the pariſh. Before, the impropriator defrayed half the charge of the books uſed in the church, or ſometimes the parſon. In times of popery, miſſals, breviaries, and manuals, being written, were very expenſive, and bought by the rectors, as alſo when rectories were eſtabliſhed. But there were many diſputes upon this ſubject, and the rectors often compelled the vicars to pay for binding the books. Vid. Lewis, Hiſt. Tranſ. p. 176.

in 1557; but the remainder of the work did not come forth till 1560. It was diſtinguiſhed by calviniſtical annotations, and held in high eſtimation by the puritans [Y].

ELIZABETH was indirectly requeſted at her coronation, to countenance a tranſlation, the Bible being preſented to her in her proceſſion, which ſhe accepted with great appearance of gratitude and veneration; and the Biſhops were ſoon afterwards appointed to prepare a tranſlation. New editions of

[Y] Above thirty editions of this were publiſhed by the Queen's and King's printers between 1560 and 1616, and others were printed at Edinburgh, Geneva, Amſterdam, &c. The New Teſtament of this is ſaid to have been the firſt Engliſh edition of the ſcriptures which was divided into verſes. The Greek and Latin Bibles were not anciently divided into chapters or verſes, at leaſt, not like thoſe now uſed. Stephen Langton, archbiſhop of Canterbury, in the reigns of King John, and of King Henry III. is ſaid to have firſt contrived the diviſion into chapters; others aſcribe the invention to Cardinal Hugo, a Dominican Monk, of the thirteenth century, who adopted alſo ſubdiviſions, diſtinguiſhed by the ſeven firſt letters of the alphabet placed in the margin, as convenient for the uſe of the Concordance, which he firſt planned for the Vulgate. About 1445, Rabbi Mordecai Nathan, alias Rabbi Iſaac Nathan, a weſtern Jew, to facilitate the conduct of a controverſy with the Chriſtians, introduced this diviſion of chapters into the Hebrew Bibles, and reſumed alſo the ancient diviſion into verſes numerically diſtinguiſhed by marginal letters at every fifth verſe; and from him the Chriſtians received and improved the plan; and Robert Stephens adopted the diviſion into the New Teſtament, of which he publiſhed a Greek edition in 1551. Vid. Prefat. Buxtorf. ad. Concord. Bibl. Hebraic. Morin. Exercit. Bibl. Par. II. Exert. vii. cap. iii. Præf. ad Concord. Græc. N. Teſt. Fabrici Biblioth. Græc. Lib. IV. c. v. Prid. vol. I. Book V.

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the Geneva, and of the great Bible were publiſhed. An act of Parliament was likewiſe paſſed for a tranſlation of the Bible into Welſh, which was printed in 1556.

In 1568, Archbiſhop Parker's very correct and improved tranſlation, undertaken by the royal command, and reviſed by the Biſhops, under the direction of the Archbiſhop, and called the Biſhop's Bible, appeared in folio [z], with a preface by Parker, and the initial letter of every tranſlator ſubjoined to his portion; and towards the concluſion of Elizabeth's reign, Ambroſe Uſher, brother of the primate of Armagh, rendered much of the Old Teſtament into Engliſh, from the Hebrew; which was never publiſhed [A].

Objections, however, being raiſed againſt all theſe tranſlations, as well as againſt others made in oppoſition to them, it was determined in the reign of King James the Firſt, when the principles of the reformation were thoroughly eſtabliſhed, to have a new verſion, which ſhould be as much as poſſible free from all the errors, and defects of former tranſlations. Accordingly fifty-four learned, and emi-

[z] It was printed in a thick quarto, and afterwards frequently in folio and quarto in 1569. This Bible was uſed in the publick ſervice for near forty years; but the Geneva Bible being more adapted to the prevailing opinions, was moſt read in private. See Le Long, p. 430, Lewis, &c.

[A] Daniel, Eccleſiaſtes, Lamentations, and Job, were tranſlated by Hugh Broughton. The manuſcript of this verſion is ſtill in three tomes quarto, in the library of Trinity-college, in Dublin.

nent men, were appointed. Seven of theſe, however, either died, or from diffidence declined the taſk. Every poſſible precaution was taken to prevent objection to the execution of the work. The remaining forty-ſeven were ranged into ſix diviſions [B]. Every individual tranſlated the portion aſſigned to the diviſion, all of which tranſlations were collated together, and when each company had determined on the conſtruction of their part, it was propoſed to the other diviſions for general approbation. They had the benefit of conſulting all preceding tranſlations, but were directed to follow, as nearly as it might be conſiſtent with fidelity, the ordinary Bible, which was diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of the Biſhop's Bible. The contributions and aſſiſtance of the learned were ſolicited from all parts, and different opinions were deliberately examined by the tranſlators, without any regard to the complaints againſt their tardineſs in the execution of the work. The tranſlators met at Oxford, and Cambridge, and Weſtminſter [C]. They began the work in 1607, and

[B] Vid. Johnſon's account. Fuller, Selden, and Collier.

[C] Three copies were ſent to London, and two perſons from each company were ſelected to reviſe the whole work. It was afterwards reviewed by Bilſon, Biſhop of Wincheſter, and Dr. Myles Smith. Theſe two perſons prefixed the arguments to the ſeveral books, and Dr. Smith, afterwards Biſhop of Glouceſter, wrote the preface now prefixed to the folio editions. Biſhop Bancroft is ſuppoſed to have been the overſeer under his majeſty, to whom it is ſaid, in the preface, that the Church was much

and finiſhed it in about three years. The death of Mr. Edward Lively, who was well ſkilled in the original languages, ſomewhat retarded the publication. It came out, however, in 1611, with all the improvements that could be derived from united induſtry, and conjoined abilities. It was firſt publiſhed in folio, in black letter, but a quarto edition was publiſhed in 1612, in the Roman type. It has ſince been repeatedly publiſhed in both. The Romaniſts [D] ſtarted many unreaſonable objections againſt this tranſlation; and the Preſbyterians profeſſed themſelves diſſatisfied. It was however allowed, even by Cromwell's committee, to be the beſt extant; and certainly it is a moſt wonderful and incomparable work, equally remarkable for the general fidelity of its conſtruction, and the magnificent ſimplicity of its language.

THAT it is not a perfect work is readily admitted; the great advancement made ſince the period of its tranſlation, in the original languages;

much bound. The marginal references, and the chronological index annexed, which are publiſhed chiefly in the quarto editions, were afterwards furniſhed by Biſhop Lloyd.

[D] The Engliſh Romaniſts, finding it impoſſible to prevent the introduction of tranſlations, publiſhed the New Teſtament at Rheims in 1582 from the Latin, in a manner as favourable to their opinions as poſſible, and afterwards in 1609, they publiſhed at Doway a tranſlation of the Old Teſtament, from the Vulgate, with annotations. They have therefore a tranſlation of the whole Bible, which, however, they are forbidden to read without a licence from their ſuperiors. The French Romaniſts have no authorized tranſlation into their language.

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the improvement that has ſucceeded in critical learning; and the many diſcoveries that have been ſtruck out in the general purſuits of knowledge, have much tended to illuſtrate the ſacred writings, and enabled us to detect many errors and defects of tranſlation that might now be corrected and removed. Preceding verſions were, perhaps, in ſome inſtances, more ſucceſsful; and ſubſequent tranſlations of individual books may, in ſome parts, have been more faithful; and, which is a ſtill more important advantage, we are now in poſſeſſion of many hundred manuſcripts that the tranſlators under King James had no opportunities of conſulting [E]. We are likewiſe emancipated from ſuperſtitious prejudices concerning the univerſal purity of the Hebrew text, and from a ſlaviſh credulity with regard to the Maſoretic points. Whenever, therefore, it ſhall be judged expedient by well-adviſed and conſiderate meaſures, to authorize a reviſal of this tranſlation, it will certainly be found capable of many, and great improvements [F]. As ſuch a work, deliberately planned, and judiciouſly executed, would unqueſtionably contribute much to the advancement of true religion, many pious men have expreſſed their earlieſt wiſhes for its accompliſhment; and

[E] Our tranſlation was made from manuſcripts of three, and four hundred years old, ſince it agrees with thoſe only. But more ancient manuſcripts are more correct, and more conſiſtent with the Samaritan Pentateuch, and ancient verſions.

[F] Biſhop Lloyd's edition of our tranſlation is improved in ſome reſpects. Dr. Paris likewiſe reviſed it in 1745.

doubtleſs,

doubtleſs, in due time, by the bleſſing of God, the prudent governors of our church will provide for its execution. It is a work not lightly to be taken in hand, and perhaps no ſingle perſon is adequate to the taſk. It is to be preſumed, at leaſt, that when a new tranſlation ſhall be countenanced by publick authority, it will be undertaken with the ſame cautious, and deliberate meaſures, that were obſerved under King James. It ſhould be the production of collective induſtry, and general contribution; and the prejudices and miſtakes which muſt characterize the works of individuals, ſhould be corrected by united enquiry, diſpaſſionate examination, and fair criticiſm. They, who already conſecrate their labours to the taſk of tranſlating the whole, or any part of the ſcriptures, are entitled to the publick gratitude and encouragement; their endeavours muſt at leaſt contribute to illuſtrate the ſacred pages, and tend to facilitate the great work of a national tranſlation. Till, however, the execution of this work ſhall be judged expedient, every ſincere and well-diſpoſed admirer of the holy oracles may be ſatisfied with the preſent tranſlation, which is, indeed, highly excellent; being in its doctrines uncorrupt, and in its general conſtruction, faithful to the original. The captious chiefly, and ſuch as ſeek for blemiſhes, are diſpoſed to cavil at its minute imperfections; which, however in a work of ſuch ſerious and intereſting value, they may require correction, ſhould not be invidiouſly detailed. The few paſſages, which, by being erroneouſly tranſlated, have furniſhed

niſhed occaſion for unjuſt and licentious aſperſions againſt the ſacred volume, are ſo clearly and ſatisfactorily explained, and vindicated by judicious comments, that no one can be miſled in his conceptions, who is deſirous of obtaining inſtruction. To amend the rendering of theſe paſſages, will be the object of all future tranſlators, who will undoubtedly be deſirous of adhering as much as poſſible to the preſent verſion, and of adopting, where they can, a conſtruction, familiarized by long uſe, and endeared by habitual reverence; of which the ſtyle has long ſerved as a ſtandard of our language, and of which the peculiar harmony and excellence could never be improved by any change that refinement might ſubſtitute.

OF

OF THE

PENTATEUCH.

THE Pentateuch, under which title the five Books of Moſes are uſually diſtinguiſhed, is a word of Greek original [A]. It was probably firſt prefixed to the Septuagint verſion, and was deſigned to include Geneſis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; all of which were written by Moſes, in his own hand, probably in the order in which they now ſtand in our tranſlation, though not diſtributed by their author into books, but compoſed in one continued work, as they remain to this day among the Jews, with no other diviſion but

[A] From Πεντε five, and Τευχος volume. It is called by the Jews, Chomez, a word ſynonymous with Pentateuch; alſo Thorah, the Law, a word which, when uſed in a larger ſenſe, is applied to the whole volume of the Scriptures.

that

that of little, and great Paraſches [B]. It is uncertain when they were divided into books, but probably the diviſion was firſt adopted in the Septuagint verſion, as the titles prefixed are of Greek derivation; they were however diſtinguiſhed as five books in the time of Joſephus.

THAT the Pentateuch was written by Moſes, we are authorized to affirm by the concurrent teſtimony of antiquity, and by the uniform report of uninterrupted tradition. He ſpeaks of himſelf in many

[B] Paraſches, from פרש, to divide. The diviſion of the law into paraſches, or ſections, is, by ſome, attributed to Moſes; by others, with more probability, to Ezra; they amounted to fifty-four, that by reading one of theſe portions every Sabbath in the ſynagogue, the people might fulfil a fancied obligation to read the law once publickly every year; the intercalated years contained fifty-four Sabbaths, and in other years a reduction correſpondent to the number of Sabbaths was eaſily made, by an occaſional junction of two chapters. Theſe greater portions were ſubdivided into ſeven ſmaller parts, called peſukim, or verſes, which were probably inſerted by Ezra for the uſe of the Targumiſts, or Chaldee interpreters, who after the captivity read a Chaldaic verſion of the ſcriptures, with the original, for the benefit of thoſe who had forgotten the Hebrew tongue, reading verſe for verſe alternately. The ſame diviſion was adopted in the prophetical books, when the reading of the law was forbidden by Antiochus Epiphanes, but in them three verſes were read together. Theſe diviſions are by no means the ſame as thoſe in our Bibles. The Jews read half of the ſection on the Monday, the remainder on the Thurſday, and on the Sabbath the whole of the ſection, both morning and evening. Vid. Prid. ſub. An. 444.

parts,

parts, as the appointed author of its contents [c]. It is mentioned as the work of Moſes under the title of the Law, by almoſt all the ſacred writers, and cited as indiſputably his work [d], and it was received as ſuch by the Jews and Samaritans, by every ſect of the Hebrew, and of the Chriſtian church.

These books, indeed, could not have been written ſubſequently to the time of Moſes, for they are addreſſed to the Iſraelites as contemporaries, and they never afterwards could have been impoſed as a genuine work upon his countrymen, whoſe religion and government were built upon them. But what is ſufficient to eſtabliſh, not only the authenticity of theſe five books, as the work of Moſes, but alſo their claim to a divine original, as dictated by the ſpirit of God; is, that the words and laws of Moſes are cited by the ſacred writers, as the words and laws of God [e], and that they were appealed to by our Saviour, and his Apoſtles, on various occaſions, as the genuine work of Moſes; as the production of an inſpired perſon, or prophet [f]; and on a ſolemn occaſion, Chriſt confirmed every jot and tittle of the

[c] Exod. xvii. 14. xxiv. 4—7. xxxiv. 27. Numb. xxxiii. 4. Deut. xxxi. 9, 19, 22, 24. Abbadie, Verité de la Relig. Chretien. Joſeph. cont. Apion, Lib. I.

[d] Joſhua i. 7, 8. viii. 34, 35. Judg. iii. 4. 2 Kings xxiii. 25. xiv. 6. 2 Chron. xxx. 16. xxiii. 18. Ezra viii. 3. Nehem. i. 7, 8. ix. and the Pſalms and Prophets paſſim.

[e] Nehem. viii. 14. Jerem. vii. 23. Matt. xv. 4. Galat. iv. 30. Heb. viii. 5. x. 30. James ii. 8.

[f] John i. 45. v. 46, 47. Luke xxiv. 27.

Law,

Law, and bare teſtimony to the infallible accompliſhment of its deſigns, and promiſes [G].

THESE books, as has been before obſerved, were immediately after their compoſition depoſited in the tabernacle [H], and thence transferred to the temple, where they were preſerved with the moſt vigilant care: every expreſſion was deemed inſpired by the articles of the Jewiſh creed. The Jews maintained that God had more care of the letters and ſyllables of the Law, than of the ſtars in Heaven, and that upon each tittle of it, whole mountains of doctrine hung; hence every individual letter was numbered, and notice was taken how often it occurred [I]. It was read every Sabbath day in the ſynagogues [K], and again ſolemnly every ſeventh year. The prince was obliged to copy it [L], and the people were commanded to teach it their children, and to wear it as "ſigns on their hands, and frontlets between their eyes" [M]. In the corrupt, and

[G] Matt. v. 17, 18. Luke xvi. 17, 31.

[H] Deut. xxxi. 26. Somewhere on the outſide of the ark. Vid. 1 Kings viii. 9. 2 Chron. v. 10.

[I] The Jews reduced the whole Law to 613 precepts, according to the number of the letters of the Decalogue, intimating that the whole Law was reductively contained therein.

[K] Luke iv. 16. Acts xiii. 15, 27. xv. 21. xxvii. 23. 2 Cor. iii. 15. Hieron. cap. vi. Bava Bathra. Maimon. præf. in Chaz. Aben. Ezra, in ch. xxv. 16. R. David. Kimchi. Deut. xxxi. 10, 24, 26.

[L] Deut. xvii. 18, 19. xxvii. 3. xxxi. 10, 11.

[M] Exod. xiii. 9. Levit. x. 11. Deut. vi. 6—9, 21. xi. 18, 19. This was probably a figurative precept which the Jews

and idolatrous reigns, indeed, of ſome of the kings of Judah, the ſacred books appear to have been much neglected. In the reign of Jehoſhaphat it was judged neceſſary to carry about a book of the law, for the inſtruction of the people [N], and many copies might have periſhed under Manaſſeth; yet ſtill a ſufficient number was always preſerved by God's providence. It is mnetioned, indeed, in the book of Kings [O], as a particular circumſtance, that in the time of Joſiah, the book of the Law was found by the high-prieſt Hilkiah; but this by no means implies, that all other copies had been deſtroyed; for whether by the Book of the Law there mentioned, be underſtood the original autograph of Moſes, (which was probably intended [P];) or only an authentic public copy, which might have been taken by the prieſts from the ſide of the ark of the covenant, to preſerve it from the ſacrilegious violence of Manaſſeth; it can by no means be ſuppoſed to have been the only book of the Law then extant, as every King was obliged to copy it on his acceſ-

Jews ſuperſtitiouſly fulfilled in a literal ſenſe, with phylacteries, inſcribed bracelets, &c. Vid. Iſaiah xlix. 16. Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. 9.

[N] 2 Chron. xvii. 8, 9. This indeed might have been an ancient practice only revived by Jehoſhaphat, for the Hebrews had probably few, if any, eſtabliſhed ſynagogues before the captivity, and this account only proves, that public copies were not generally diſperſed through the cities of Judæa. Vid. 2 Chron. xv. 3.

[O] 2 Kings xxii. 8, 11.

[P] 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14.

ſion to the throne, and as it was the very baſis of every civil, as well as of every religious regulation; and not to mention private copies, Joſiah muſt certainly have ſeen the book of the Law, or he would not have projected the reformation of his kingdom in the manner recorded in the book of Kings [q]. The ſurprize, therefore, that Hilkiah, and the grief that Joſiah are related to have felt, were owing either to the extraordinary circumſtance of finding the book in the time of cleanſing the temple, and of their endeavours to effect a reformation, or to the multiplicity and importance of thoſe precepts, which, as they muſt have been conſcious, had been violated and neglected.

Whether or not Moſes wrote out twelve copies, as is related by tradition [r]; it is probable, that each tribe was furniſhed with a book of the Law. The ſchools of the prophets likewiſe, the ten tribes of Iſrael, and the Levites, who were appointed to read the Law in all parts, muſt have been provided with books; and it is certain that authentic copies were preſerved during the captivity [s], and publickly read after the return [t]; it may be added alſo, that as ſcribes of the Law were at this time eſtabliſhed [u], there is no improbability in the ac-

[q] Hottinger. Hiſt. Eccleſ. N. T. ſect. XVI. Pars 4. p. 137.

[r] Huet. Prop. iv.

[s] Dan. ix. 11, 13. Tobit vi. 12. vii. 13.

[t] Ezra iii. 2. vi. 18. Nehem. i. 8, 9.

[u] Jerem. viii. 8. Ezra iv. 8.

counts,

counts, which ſtate, that Ezra and Nehemiah furniſhed 300 copies for the congregation and ſynagogues, founded on the re-eſtabliſhment of the Jewiſh church. The ſame reverence which henceforward occaſioned a multiplication of the copies of the law, produced alſo more numerous guardians to watch over its purity, and the encreaſing accuracy of the Maſora, contributed ſtill farther to ſecure its integrity.

The Jews believed that Moſes was enlightened by a much higher and more excellent inſpiration than any ſubſequent prophet [x], and his ſuperiority is expreſsly aſſerted in an eulogium on his character in the book of Deuteronomy, which may have been inſerted by Ezra. In the New Teſtament he is always mentioned diſtinctly, and with peculiar reſpect [y]. He converſed with God "face to face, as a man ſpeaketh unto his friend [z]," in that priviledged and familiar intercourſe that St. Paul promiſes to the heirs of future ſalvation [a]. Some indeed have ſuppoſed that Moſes did not literally contemplate God himſelf; for our Saviour ſays, that "no man hath ſeen God at any time" [b], and we are told that "the Law was given by angels" [c]. He beheld, however, as much as it was poſ-

[x] Vid. Maimon. de Fund. Legis.

[y] Mark ix. 4. Luke xvi. 29. Acts vii. 35. Rev. xv. 3.

[z] Exod. xxxiii. 11.

[a] 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Smith's Diſcour. on Prophecy, ch. ii. and xi.

[b] John i. 18. v. 37.

[c] Acts vii. 38; 53. Heb. ii. 2. Gal. iii. 19.

ſible for man to behold, ſome apparent and diſtinct repreſentation of the divine preſence, miraculouſly diſplayed, though veiled perhaps in a glorious cloud; it being impoſſible, as Moſes was informed, for man to contemplate the actual face, or untempered majeſty of God [D]. It muſt therefore be underſtood that God ſpake to him not in viſions and dark ſpeeches, but in clear and manifeſt revelations [E]. Moſes was likewiſe priviledged to addreſs God at all times [F], without the aſſiſtance of the high-prieſt, who conſulted by means of the Urim and Thummim. From this power of obtaining revelations immediately from God, proceeded thoſe ſtriking prophecies which he delivered. And theſe prophecies, as well as many others which he records, as uttered by the Patriarchs, to whom God diſcloſed his will, were gradually fulfilled in ſucceſſive events, or finally accompliſhed in the Meſſiah. Moſes was likewiſe eminently inveſted with the power of miracles, and performed many illuſtrious wonders in Egypt, and in the wilderneſs; for the truth of which he appeals to his countrymen, and grounds the authority of his government and laws upon them [G]. The Egyptian magicians, who were intereſted to defeat his meaſures, acknowledged that "the finger of God [H]" was ſhewn in his miracles, and the

[D] Exod. xxxiii. 20.
[E] Numb. xii. 7, 8.
[F] Numb. vii. 8, 9. ix. 8. Exod. xxv. 22.
[G] Numb. xvi. 28—35. Exod. xiv. 31. xix. 9.
[H] Exod. viii. 19. Euſeb. Præp. Evan. Lib. IX. cap. 10.

Iſraelites,

Iſraelites, who witneſſed his power, were ſo ſatisfied of the truth of his pretenſions (themſelves having witneſſed the ſupport which he received from God), that they adopted his laws, and incorporated them into the very frame of their government, ſo that their civil and religious policy was founded on the platform that he had drawn. They beheld his extraordinary qualities; his open and generous temper; his fortitude and meekneſs ſo admirably blended [I]; his piety and wiſdom; his zeal for God's ſervice, and for the welfare of his people [K], which led him to prefer "affliction to the treaſures of Egypt [L]." They ſaw, that in obedience to God's ſentence, he continued to wander with them in a deſart, where even ſuſtenance could be obtained only by a miracle, and that he exerted the ſame ſtrenuous endeavours for the attainment of the promiſed land after it had been revealed to him, that he ſhould not live to conduct the people to its poſſeſſion [M]. They beheld, likewiſe, that diſintereſted liberality with which he diſtributed wealth, and honors on other families, while he left his own to attend on the tabernacle in a ſubordinate character [N], with no

[I] Ecclus. xlv. 1—5.

[K] Exod. xxxii. 32. By entreating to be "blotted out of God's book," Moſes meant, that he would ſubmit to death, and the loſs of God's promiſed bleſſings, if he could obtain a remiſſion of the ſins of the Iſraelites. Com. with Numb. xi. 15.

[L] Heb. xi. 24—28. Exod. xlv. 1—5. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. IV. cap. 8.

[M] Numb. xxvii. 12, 13.

[N] Numb. xi. 29. xxvii. 15—17. xxxiv. 17. Deut. i. 38.

allotment of land, or proviſion, but what muſt have been deemed precarious, if he had not truſted in the Divine ſupport for the permanency of his inſtitutions, appointing a ſtranger to ſucceed him in the government of the people, and directing them to look to the tribe of Judah for their future ſovereigns, and a greater prophet than himſelf.

If our knowledge of the truth of the exiſtence of theſe qualities be drawn from the accounts of Moſes himſelf, it muſt be recollected that he addreſſed his contemporaries, who could, from their own experience, judge of his veracity. His wiſdom and integrity are diſplayed likewiſe in the deſcription of his actions, and not by artful encomiums on his own character, of which he ſeldom ſpeaks, but to illuſtrate his conduct. If, indeed, he be ſometimes provoked to aſſert that claim, to which he was juſtly entitled [o], he confeſſes with equal candour, his own faults and miſconduct [p]. With the ſame ingenuous regard to truth, he alſo records the errors

[o] Numb. xii. 3.

[p] Exod. iv. 10—14. Numb. xx. 1—12. It is not in this laſt inſtance preciſely ſtated, how Moſes and Aaron had excited the divine wrath, and many ſtrange conjectures have been formed on that ſubject; the text informs us, that God accuſed Moſes and Aaron of incredulity; and it appears, that Moſes, though commanded only to ſpeak to the rock, ſmote it twice with the rod. They had, perhaps, uttered ſome timid or impatient expreſſions; and any want of faith in them was more offenſive and dangerous, as they had received ſuch ſignal aſſurances of favour, and were conſpicuous objects of example to the people. Vid. Pſalm cvi. 32, 33. Numb. xxvii. 14. Deut. xxxii. 51. vid. alſo Numb. xi. 11—15.

and

and ſins of his own anceſtors and relations [Q], and of Aaron, who acted with him, and boldly cenſures the diſobedience of the people whom he addreſſes. He uniformly repreſents them as a "ſtiff-necked and rebellious people," reminds them of their baſe ingratitude to God, and fearleſsly threatens them with farther marks of the divine vengeance [R]. He delivered his laws without reſpect to perſons; ſpoke in the peremptory tone of one commiſſioned by God, not as deſirous to conciliate favour, but as confiding in the aſſiſtance of him, whoſe miniſter he was. If the contemporaries of Moſes, who were the ſpectators of the works, and qualities which he diſplayed, had inconteſtible evidence of the divine appointment of their legiſlator; ſucceeding generations had alſo ſufficient proofs of the truth and authority of thoſe writings, which he bequeathed for their inſtruction. They muſt have been convinced that the deliverance from Egypt, and the ſuſtenance procured for ſo large a multitude, during the continuance in the wilderneſs, could have been obtained only by divine interpoſition. They muſt have been perſuaded, that their forefathers could not have accepted the diſpenſation of Moſes, but in the aſſurance of its being revealed from God, and they beheld permanent teſtimonies of his veracity and divine commiſſion, in the perpetual obſervance of thoſe

[Q] Gen. xxxiv. 13—30. xlix. 5—7. Exod. vi. 20. Numb. xii. 1, 2, 10. xxxii. 4. Capell. ad. A. M. 2481.

[R] Deut. ix. 6—24. xxxii. 20—25—28.

many feſtivals [s], laws, and rites [t], of which he recorded the inſtitution, as well as in thoſe ſtanding vouchers of the truth of his hiſtory and pretenſions, the ark and tabernacle [u]; the Urim and Thummim; and the atteſtation of the prophets; and laſtly in the accompliſhment of his threats and promiſes which they experienced in various viciſſitudes; in the covenanted protection afforded during their attendance on God's ſervice at their ſolemn feaſts [x]; in the ſuperfluous abundance that preceded the ſabbatical, and the jubilee years [y]; in the miraculous effects of the waters of jealouſy [z]; in the deſcent of the celeſtial fire, which conſumed the ſacrifices [a]; and in many other particulars, which need not be enumerated, but which fully account for thoſe firm convictions, and for that rooted attachment for the memory and writings of their great lawgiver, which they have entailed on their poſterity.

Moses was of the tribe of Levi, the ſon of Amram, and an immediate deſcendant of Abraham. He was born about A. M. 2432; and diſtinguiſhed

[s] As thoſe of the feaſts of the Paſſover, of Pentecoſt, of Tabernacles, of Sabbath, &c.

[t] As that of Circumciſion.

[u] As alſo the rod of Aaron, which bloſſomed in the night; the preſerved manna, and the brazen ſerpent, kept till the time of Hezekiah. Vid. 2 Kings xviii. 4. Exod. xvi. 33, 34. Numb. xvii. 5—8. Heb. ix. 4.

[x] Exod. xxxiv. 23, 24.

[y] Levit. xxv. 3—22.

[z] Numb. xi. 5—31.

[a] 1 Kings xviii. 38. 2 Chron. vii. 1. 2 Macc. ii. 10.

for

for the attractive beauty of his form. He was miraculouſly preſerved from deſtruction, and educated "in all the wiſdom of the Egyptians" [B]. He diſplayed early marks of ſuperior qualities, and being ſelected by God for the deliverance and inſtruction of the Iſraelites, he maturely examined the truth of the divine appearance, and diffidently declined the commiſſion [C], being, as he ſaid, "ſlow of ſpeech [D]," and apprehenſive that he was of too little eſtimation, to be appointed as the deliverer of the Iſraelites. But when encouraged by God, he accepted of the appointment, and with a perſeverance and fortitude that have never been equalled, contended for, and by divine aſſiſtance effected, the deliverance of the Iſraelites from their ſevere bondage; and conducted them through difficulties miraculouſly ſubdued, to the borders of the promiſed land; he communicated to them a code of revealed laws, and modelled their government to a form adapted to the conqueſt and poſſeſſion of the country, and calculated in every reſpect to anſwer thoſe high purpoſes which it was intended to fulfil. Having accompliſhed his miniſtry, and completed the Pentateuch, that work which unfolds the wiſdom of the firſt diſpenſation, and which opened a ſource of ſacred inſtruction to mankind; he "in the faith" relinquiſhed the proſpect of Canaan; and in the expectation "of the

[B] Acts vii. 20—22. Philo. de Vit. Moſ. Lib. I. p. 606. Macrob. Saturn. Lib. II. cap. 15.

[C] Exod. iii.

[D] Exod. iv. 10.

recompenſe

recompenſe of an higher reward," reſigned that life which had been devoted to God's ſervice, in the 120th year of his age, to be ſucceeded by no equal prophet, till the arrival of the Meſſiah, of whom he was a ſignal type [E]; having in many various circumſtances of his character, and eventful life, obviouſly prefigured the ſpiritual redeemer of mankind [F].

THE ſepulchre of Moſes, though ſaid to have been "in the valley of Moab [G]," ſeems to have been miraculouſly concealed, in order to prevent any idolatrous veneration of it; his character, however, was remembered by his people, with a reve-

[E] Ezra, or the prophet, who annexed to the Pentateuch the account of Moſes's death, obſerves, that no prophet had ſince ariſen like unto Moſes; meaning, perhaps, that the great prophet, the Meſſiah, whom Moſes promiſed, was not yet arrived. Deut. xviii. 18, 19. xxxiv. 10.

[F] Euſeb. Demon. Evang. Lib. III. cap. 2. Jortin's Remarks on Eccles. Hiſt. Vol. I. p. 196—226. Heb. iii. 2.

[G] Deut. xxxiv. 6. Some Maronite ſhepherds were ſaid to have found his tomb in Mount Nebo, A. D. 1565; but this is an idle fiction. Vid. Baſnage's Hiſt. of Jews, Lib. IV. cap. 7. and Patrick in Deut. iv. 6. St. Jude, in his epiſtle, ſpeaks of a diſpute between Michael and the Devil, concerning the body of Moſes, alluding probably to a tradition received among the Jews, as poſſibly does St. Paul, when he mentions the names of Jannes and Jambres, who withſtood Moſes, and relates, that Moſes ſaid, he "exceedingly feared and quaked" on Mount Sinai, ſince theſe particulars are not recorded in the Old Teſtament. Jude 9. 2 Tim. iii. 8. Heb. xii. 21. An account of the diſpute concerning the body of Moſes, was formerly in an apocryphal book, entitled Περι αναληψεως Μωσεως, vide Origen. Περι αρχων, Lib. III. cap. 2.

rence

rence that approached to ſuperſtition. By the Greeks and Romans alſo, and other Heathen nations, he was acknowledged not only as the moſt ancient lawgiver [H], and as an hiſtorian of unimpeached veracity [I]; but by an apotheoſis, under which the venerable characters of antiquity were uſually reverenced, he was tranſlated among the gods, and worſhipped under different names [K]; for it is eaſy to trace the features of the Hebrew legiſlator, veiled under the perſonage of many a pagan deity, and to diſcern his qualities and actions under the borrowed attributes and conduct which idolatry aſcribed to the objects of its veneration. So alſo were the cuſtoms, laws, and ceremonies of many nations, evidently derived from the Moſaic inſtitutions [L]. Every one, however ſlightly converſant with the policy and religion of pagan antiquity, will diſcover in the Pentateuch, the ſources from whence they were often drawn. In the heroes and benefactors conſecrated by Heathen admiration, are deſcribed the Patriarchs and illuſtrious perſons of ſcripture. In the fictions of pagan mythology, we behold the disfigured relations of ſacred hiſtory; and the proud

[H] Juſtin Martyr, Oper. p. 9. Diodor. Sic. Lib. I. p. 84. and Fragm. l. 40. Edit. Rhodom. Strabo's Geogr. Lib. XVI. p. 1103. Tacit. Hiſt. Lib. V. Juſt. Lib. XXXVI. cap. 2. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. I. cap. 3.

[I] To this even Porphyry bore teſtimony.

[K] Artapan. in Euſeb. Voſſius, Bochart, Juſt. Martyr, Apol. c. 97. Huet. Prop. IV. cap. 8, 9.

[L] Juſtin. Præn. cap. 35. Waterland's Charge to the Clergy of Middleſex, May 19, 1731.

diſcoveries

diſcoveries of philoſophy are often but the imperfect tranſcript of revealed wiſdom [M]. In ſhort, the hiſtorians, the poets, and the philoſophers of antiquity have enriched their ſeveral works with diſtorted accounts of circumſtances reported in the ſacred volume. The pages of ſucceſſive writers are pregnant with its relations, and the names of numberleſs authors might be produced, whoſe works either confirm the truth of the Pentateuch, or bear teſtimony to the character and pretenſions of its author [N]. But this has been ſo often done, that it muſt be unneceſſary to dwell on the ſubject here.

In a general conſideration of the character of that

[M] Euſeb. Præp. Evan. Lib. IX. cap. 6, 12, 14, 15. Lib. XIII. cap. 12. Cyril cont. Jul. Lib. I. p. 8. Tatian. ad Græc. cap. 61. Joſeph. cont. Apion. Lib. I. cap. 22. Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. I.

[N] If there were no tranſlation of the ſcriptures into Greek before that of the Septuagint, yet the Heathen writers might have derived much ſacred intelligence from colloquial intercourſe, and Plato indeed profeſſes to have ſo collected Phœnician and Syrian, that is Hebrew accounts. Vide Plato in Cratyl. Nations appear to have been at firſt diſtinguiſhed for civil and religious knowledge, in proportion to their proximity to, and communication with thoſe countries where the light of revelation ſhone. The diſperſion of the Jews into foreign countries afterwards furniſhed channels of information to the Heathen nations, and ſome of this people were certainly ſcattered into Greece about the time that the Greek mythology was compoſed. Vid. Joel iii. 6. Bochart's Phaleg. Lib. IV. cap. 24. Grotius de Verit. Lib. cap. 16. Lib. III. cap. 16. Huet. Prop. IV. cap. 2. Bryant's Mythol. Pref. to Shuckford's Connect. Edwards's Diſcour. Vol. I. Hartley's Diſcourſe on the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion in Watſon's Tracts, Vol. 2d.

diſpen-

diſpenſation, which is unfolded in the following books, there are ſome remarks which ſhould be ſtated for its illuſtration. In the firſt place it ſhould be obſerved, that we are authorized by the ſacred writers to eſteem it as in ſome reſpects imperfect, as a particular and a temporary covenant to endure only for a ſeaſon [o]; imperfect, in condeſcenſion to the undiſciplined ſtubbornneſs of the Iſraelites [p], and imperfect as elementary and figurative only of a ſpiritual covenant [q]. As a code of laws deſigned for the civil government of the Iſraelites, it was contrived with a view to the regulation of the external conduct. It was framed rather with intention to control the lawleſs and diſobedient, than to effect an inward and perfect purity of heart. So farther, as the law could not juſtify mankind from the guilt of original ſin, and as an obedience to carnal ordinances could not be perfect or ſatisfactory, the Moſaic diſpenſation did not ſtipulate for thoſe rewards which are offered by

[o] Jerem. iii. 16. xxxi. 31—34. Heb. vii. 18, 19. viii. 7—13. ix. 10.

[p] Exod. xxxiii. 23. Deut. xxxii. 28. Ezek. xx. 25. Matt. xix. 8. Acts xv. 10. Gal. v. 1. 1 Tim. i. 9, 10. It is a great miſtake, however, to ſuppoſe that any ritual precepts were ordained by the Moſaic law, in accommodation to cuſtoms which prevailed in Egypt, ſince its deſign was to ſegregate the Iſraelites from all other nations, and to wean them from all tendencies to idolatry, and ſince it inculcated a particular abhorrence of Egyptian practices. Levit. xviii. 3. Circumciſion was certainly a divine appointment firſt obſerved as a religious rite by Abraham. Gen. xvii. 11.

[q] Heb. vii. 18, 19. Gal. iv. 3—9.

Chriſt

Chriſt [R], though it held out intimations of immortality, and prepared mankind for the gracious promiſes which were made by the goſpel. As a covenant of works, it required undeviating obedience under the ſevereſt denunciations of wrath [S], and made no allowance for unintentional offences; not calculated, like the goſpel, to proffer gracious terms of reconciliation and favour, but to point out the condition of man obnoxious to God's wrath [T], and the inſufficiency of his endeavours to propitiate forgiveneſs, and to atone for ſin [U].

It is likewiſe obvious to remark, that Moſes, though appointed to communicate a divine law, muſt, with reſpect to the Iſraelites, be contemplated as an human legiſlator. He addreſſes them, indeed, as a ſtate ſubjected to a theocracy; but God had deigned to be conſidered in the light of a temporal king to his choſen people [X]: Moſes, therefore, ſpeaking as the legiſlator of a civil government, and delivering his laws to the people conſidered in their collective national character, enforces them chiefly on temporal ſanctions [Y]; on motives of preſent reward and

[R] Rom. iii. 20. viii. 3. Gal. ii. 16. iii. 21. Heb. viii. 6. ix. 14, 15.

[S] Deut. xxvii. 26. Gal. iii. 10.

[T] 1 John i. 7. Rom. iv. 15. viii. 2. 2 Cor. iii. 6—9. Col. ii. 14.

[U] Rom. iii. 19, 20. vii. 5—11. Gal. iii. 22.

[X] Exod. xix. 6. 1 Sam. xii. 12, 17, 19. Iſaiah xxxiii. 22. Hagg. ii. 4, 5. Warburt. Div. Legal. Lib. 5. Sect. 3.

[Y] Porter's Diſſ. p. 260. Moſes had no occaſion to reveal in preciſe terms the immortality of the ſoul, which the Iſraelites as

and preſent puniſhment; thus annexing civil benefits to the obſervance, and civil penalties to the breach of political laws, as reſpectively their proper and proportioned conſequences. To the dull apprehenſions, likewiſe, and ſenſual minds of the Iſraelites, promiſes and threats of ſpeedy accompliſhment were neceſſary, and well calculated to control them, in ſubſerviency to thoſe laws, of which the violation was immediately hoſtile to the declared intention of God, in the conſtitution of the Hebrew polity. Moſes, reſting alſo on the miraculous proofs of its divine original which accompanied the promulgation of the law, and confident of the divine ſupport in its eſtabliſhment, was under no neceſſity of recommending its acceptance by a direct appeal to thoſe high and important inducements which might have been derived from the conſideration of a future life and judgment. As the miniſter, however, of a divine revelation, as a teacher of religion, in which light alſo Moſes muſt be contemplated; he undoubtedly intimated higher encouragements than thoſe of temporal reward, and endeavoured to animate his people by the diſplay of a more glorious proſpect. He did not abſolutely propoſe an eternal recompence to the

as well as all other people believed, and which had been implied in God's promiſes to the patriarchs. La Blelerie, in a note to the Cæſars of Julian, well obſerves, that no nation has received from its lawgivers the belief of another life; the lawgivers have every where found it. The perſuaſion of the immortality of the ſoul, as well as that of the exiſtence of God, is the tenet of all nations; the faith of mankind.

righteous,

righteous, but held out the expectation of immortality to thoſe who relied on God's promiſes.

HENCE it is that he ſo particularly deſcribes the attributes and deſigns of God [z]; ſo ſtrongly inſiſts on the advantage of obedience, and occaſionally adverts to that final retribution, which ſhould take place after death [A]. It was, however, not ſo much by the poſitive declarations, as by the figurative promiſes of the law, that Moſes held out the conſideration of eternal recompence to his people; for it was conſiſtent with the typical character of the firſt diſpenſation, which was figurative in all its parts, to ſhadow out, rather than directly to reveal thoſe ſpiritual rewards, which were to be annexed, as more exalted ſanctions to an higher covenant [B]; and that the promiſes of the Moſaic law, were the figures and repreſentations of "better things to come," [c] as alſo, that its threats were ſignificant of ſtronger denunciations, is evident, not only from their cor-

[z] Exod. iii. 6. comp. with Luke xx. 37. Gen. i. 27. ii. 7. iii. 15. Numb. xxiv. 17. Deut. xxxii. 29.

[A] Deut. xxxii. 29. (where Acherith-am ſhould have been tranſlated, their future ſtate). Numb. xxiii. 10. Deut. xxxii. 39.

[B] Heb. viii. 6. Though the law was deſigned rather to convince mankind of ſin, by the ſeverity of its requiſitions, than to furniſh them with any diſtinct aſſurance of immortality; yet, nevertheleſs, ſalvation was unqueſtionably to be obtained in virtue of Chriſt's atonement, by thoſe who fulfilled the terms of the old covenant. Luke x. 25, 28; xxv. 42, 43. Rom. iii. 19, 20. Gal. iii. 22.

[c] Pſalm cxxxiii. 3. Deut. xxx. 15—19. comp. with Luke x. 25—28.

reſpondent and alluſive character [D], but alſo from the interpretations of the prophets; and it is certain that if the ſenſual and duller ranks were unable to diſcover the full extent of the promiſes, yet the more inſtructed and more enlightened perſons underſtood and confided in its ſpiritual import [E]. Still, however, it muſt be repeated, Moſes does not ground his laws on ſpiritual ſanctions, but rather has recourſe to the ſtrongeſt and moſt affecting motives of preſent conſideration, urging God's threat "of viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children [F]."

It remains to be remarked, with reſpect to the laws delivered to the people of Iſrael, that ſome were of a general and permanent, others of a confined and temporary nature. They are uſually diſtinguiſhed into moral, ceremonial, and judicial.

The ceremonial and the judicial laws are in the following books joined together, as the Hebrew religion and polity were built up together in one fabrick; theſe laws, as adapted to the particular ſtate

[D] Hieron. Epiſt. Dardan.

[E] Heb. xi. 8—16. The Moſaic covenant included that made to Abraham, which was a counterpart of the goſpel covenant, and of which the promiſes were certainly ſpiritual, and in the renewal of this covenant, together with that made at Sinai, Moſes blends temporal and ſpiritual promiſes. Vid. Gen. xvii. 7. Deut. xxix. 13. xxx. Gal. iii. 8, 17. Jude 14, 15. Acts xxiv. 14, 15, &c. Tacitus ſtates, that the Jews believed in the immortality of the ſoul. See Hiſt. l. 3.

[F] Exod. xx. 5. Deut. v. 9. This denunciation againſt idolatry applied to puniſhments only in the preſent life, for God afterwards declared, that as to future retribution, the ſon ſhould not bear the iniquity of the father. Ezek. xviii. 20.

and government of the Iſraelites [G], and as often incapable of general application [H], are collectively repreſented as not obligatory on other nations. Many of theſe laws are indeed pronounced by Moſes, to be "laws and ordinances for ever," "through all generations [I]," and hence the Jews believe, that they never ſhall be aboliſhed [K], but it is certain, that theſe expreſſions muſt be underſtood to mean only, that ſuch laws ſhould not be liable to abrogation by any human authority, and that they ſhould long continue; but by no means, that they ſhould never be reverſed by the ſame authority, on which they were firſt eſtabliſhed [L].

The ceremonial laws were unqueſtionably tranſient inſtitutions, deſigned to intimate and foreſhew evangelical appointments. As therefore in their na-

[G] Circumciſion, as a rite of diſtinction, was uſeleſs when the barriers between the Jew and Gentile were thrown down, its figurative intention to promote purity of heart was preſerved in the goſpel precepts, and its actual practice in hot countries, as conducive to cleanneſs, was not forbidden, or diſcouraged, but as it implied a ſubſerviency to the ritual law.

[H] The number of the prieſts and Levites was limited. All nations could not be ſerved by the Aaronical prieſthood, neither could they reſort three times a year to one place.

[I] Exod. xii. 14—17. xxxi. 21. xl. 15. Levit. iii. 17. vi. 18. vii. 36. x. 9. xxxiii. 14—21—31—41. xxiv. 3. Numb. xv. 15. xix. 10.

[K] Vid. Maimon. More Nevoch. Par. II. cap. 38.

[L] The ceremonial laws were ſometimes diſpenſed with, as was circumciſion in the wilderneſs, where it was of but little uſe. So David eat of the ſhew-bread, and our Saviour juſtified his conduct. Vid. 1 Sam. xxi. 6. Matt. xii. 3—4.

ture,

ture, figurative of future particulars, they have paſſed away on the accompliſhment of thoſe things, of which they were the ſhadows [M]; ritual obſervances are now unprofitable as ſpiritual righteouſneſs is introduced [N], and the Levitical prieſthood being changed, its appendent laws are changed alſo [O]. The end of the ceremonial laws is fulfilled, and they remain only as the picture of a well concerted ſcheme; the prophetic teſtimonies that ſupport a more ſpiritual covenant.

The judicial laws, alſo, as far as they reſpected the Iſraelites as a civil ſociety, and were contrived with regard to the peculiar and appropriate condition of that people; as far as they were ſuited to the exigencies of a time, and deviſed with a view to the accompliſhment of certain purpoſes now effected, are no longer binding, as poſitive laws on us.

Christ did not indeed formally, and in expreſs terms, repeal any part of the Moſaic law; but, whatever was accompliſhed, did neceſſarily expire. The Apoſtles, it is true, though they regarded the ceremonial law as a bondage from which they were freed [P], ſtill continued to obſerve ſome of its precepts. This, however, was by no means as a neceſſary ſervice, but in compliance with the prejudices

[M] Coloſſ. ii. 17.

[N] Rom. vii. 6. Heb. vii. 18, 19. 1 Peter ii. 5. Barnab. Epiſt.

[O] Heb. vii. 12.

[P] Acts xxi. 21—27. 1 Cor. ix. 20. Gal. iv. v. 1—5.

of the proſelyte Jews [q]. As the force of education and long habit could not be immediately counteracted, the Jews were ſuffered to continue in the obſervance of thoſe ritual precepts, which, if now obſolete, were at leaſt harmleſs, while they were not ſet up in oppoſition to the pretenſions of the goſpel covenant.

The Apoſtles, likewiſe, living under a government which was founded on the Moſaic eſtabliſhment, and which had the judicial laws incorporated into the very frame of its conſtitution, could not, without violating the duties of good citizens, and without offending againſt the authority of the civil magiſtrate, refuſe to be ſubſervient to the regulations of that polity; they muſt have perceived, however, that as far as the civil were interwoven with the religious inſtitutions, they ſhould give way to evangelical appointments. They muſt have underſtood, that as the diſtinctions between Jew and Gentile were now to ceaſe, the whole of that œconomy which was contrived to keep the Iſraelites a ſeparate people, was uſeleſs and inconſiſtent with the deſign of chriſtianity. Yet as they knew that it was only

[q] Acts xvi. 3. St. Paul circumciſed Timotheus, "becauſe of the Jews which were in thoſe quarters." In a council previouſly held, the Apoſtles deliberated, indeed, concerning the neceſſity of circumciſion; but they certainly underſtood, that with reſpect to the Gentiles at leaſt, there could be no obligation to obſerve the law, as far as it was of a temporary and local nature. They appear to have aſſembled only to ratify by an unanimous deciſion, the ſentiments of Paul and Barnabas. Vid. Acts xv. 1—29.

by

by the gradual operation of the Chriſtian ſpirit, that the Jews could be weaned from a long eſtabliſhed obedience to the law, and that in fact till the conſtitution of their country ſhould be changed or diſſolved, ſuch obedience was in ſome degree neceſſary; the apoſtles only then reprobated the advocates for the obſervance of the Moſaic law, when they ſought to enforce it as generally neceſſary, and as a means of juſtification [R]: they taught that ſalvation was to be obtained without the law [S], and expreſsly exempted the Gentile converts from the neceſſity of reſpecting any precepts but thoſe which were entirely moral, or partook of a moral character [T].

As to the moral laws, whether thoſe contained in the Decalogue, or thoſe occaſionally interſperſed through the judicial and ceremonial code, it is evident that theſe, as having in themſelves an intrinſic excellence and univerſal propriety, and as founded on thoſe relations which eternally ſubſiſt, as well

[R] Auguſt. cont. Fauſt. Lib. XIX. cap. 17. Juſt. Martyr, Dialog. p. 230. Edit. Thirl. Conſtit. Apoſtol. Lib. VI. cap. 11, 12—20, 21, 22. Rom. x. 5.

[S] Acts xiii. 39. Rom. iii. 28. ix. 32. Gal. ii. 16.

[T] Acts xv. 10, 11. This declaration was firſt made in favour of the Gentile nations. Vid. Acts xv. 19, who had neither prejudices nor civil regulations to control them; but the Goſpel liberty was to extend equally to the Jews, when they ſhould be releaſed from the influence of habit, and the injunctions of civil authority. Rom. vii. 4. viii. 15. Indeed, after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, moſt of the Hebrew converts to Chriſtianity renounced the Moſaic law without heſitation: a part only adhered to it, as the Nazarenes, Ebionites, &c. Vide Moſheim. de Rebus Chriſt. Ant. Conſtant. Sæc. ii. ſect. 38, note *.

with reference to our dependance on God, as between man and man reciprocally, muſt remain in perpetual force; for the Moſaic law was annihilated, only ſo far as it was of a figurative and temporary character.

The ten Commandments which were firſt given, as containing the primary principles of all law, were doubtleſs introduced with ſuch majeſty and ſolemnity, that they might retain an everlaſting and irreverſible authority, which no time ſhould alter, no change of circumſtance annul or invalidate; they were uttered by the voice of God, before the whole multitude of Iſrael; were written twice by God's own finger [u]; and are obviouſly diſtinguiſhed from the other laws, which were given to Moſes only, which were written by him, and which were moulded in conformity to the peculiar condition and circumſtances of the Iſraelites. Moſes likewiſe, (as has been obſerved by Hooker [x],) evidently diſcriminates the moral from the ceremonial laws, for in his recapitulation of the law, in the book of Deuteronomy, he ſays, "the Lord ſpake unto you out of the midſt of the fire, ye heard the voice of the words, but ſaw no ſimilitude, only a voice, and he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, the ten Commandments, and wrote them on two tables of ſtone," (durable mo-

[u] Exod. xxxi. 18. That is by God's immediate power, and not by the act of man. Vid. Maimon. More Nevoc. Par. I. cap. 66.

[x] Hooker's Eccleſ. Polit. Book III. p. 146.

numents

numents to intimate their unperiſhable authority) "and the Lord commanded me at the ſame time to teach you the ſtatutes and judgments, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go over to poſſeſs it [y]." Theſe laws then, given for the advantage of all mankind, founded on principles of invariable and univerſal propriety [z], and ſtamped with the two great characters of Chriſtian excellence, gratitude to God, and love to man, are properly inſcribed on everlaſting tablets, in the Chriſtian church, and muſt be obſerved as long as any reverence for the deity ſhall exiſt.

The other moral laws, which are intermixed with the ceremonial and judicial precepts, and which have entirely a general character [a], may be conſidered

[y] Deut. iv. 10—14. v.

[z] The morality of the fourth Commandment, and its perpetual force, (though with a change as to the day) has been conſidered as unqueſtionable as that of any other part of the Decalogue.

[a] Of theſe there are many. Vid. Exod. xxi. 19, 20, 22. xxii. 1, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11—16, 19, 20—22, 26—28. xxiii. 1—9, 12. Levit. xvii. 7. xix. 9, 10, 14, 17, 18. 29, 35, 36, xx. 9, 10, 17. xxiii. 22. xxiv. 18. Numb. xxx. 2. Deut. i. 16, 17. xiv. 29. xv. 7, 8, 11. xvii. 6. xxii. 1—3, 14—21. xxv. 14, 15. It may be deemed ſuperfluous to contend for theſe, as the ſame principles are inculcated in the Decalogue, but every injunction which illuſtrates the moral duties, and dilates moral precepts, is important. The law and the prophets are not uſeleſs, though we poſſeſs the "two Commandments on which they hang," nor is the decalogue ſuperfluous, ſince the goſpel hath furniſhed a more perfect rule, and declared, that all the law is fulfilled in one word. Matt. xxii. 40. Gal. v. 14. Beſides, the dignity of the Moſaic law is affected by this conſideration.

as corollaries from, or commentaries on, the Decalogue. Theſe, though blended with others of a local and temporary nature, and ſcattered through a collection ſuperſeded, and virtually repealed, have, as a revelation of the divine will, which is ever uniform in the ſame circumſtances, as well as from their intrinſic character, a claim to perpetual obſervance, as much as thoſe of the Decalogue. They were delivered it is true with leſs awful circumſtances than were the ten Commandments, which ſummed up in a compendious form the whole excellence of the moral law; but the other laws had not the leſs authority, becauſe delivered by the mediation of Moſes, at the particular requeſt of the people, who trembled at the voice of God [B]; and no argument againſt the perpetuity of theſe ſecondary laws can be drawn from the direction added, (chiefly for the ſake of thoſe that were of a local and temporary nature) to obſerve them in the land of Judæa; ſince thoſe of the two tables, though indiſputably of univerſal obligation, were delivered with a ſimilar application, as appears from the ſanction annexed to the fifth Commandment [C]. No part of the law, as far as it is

[B] Exod. xx. 19.

[C] This annexed motive of temporal reward, as well as the exordium prefixed to the firſt Commandment, and the commemoration added to the fourth, in Deut. v. 15, have an appropriate application when addreſſed to the Jews, which, however, by no means affects the univerſality and perpetuity of the Decalogue; and if the direction which accompanied the other laws be conceived to reſtrict their obſervance to the land of Canaan, it can apply only to thoſe of a local and temporary nature, ſince the others might, with equal reaſon, be obſerved elſewhere.

ſtrictly

ſtrictly moral, is abrogated by the goſpel, any more than are the commandments of the Decalogue. The old diſpenſation is declared invalid only as a covenant of ſalvation, and it is evacuated in Chriſt only as far as it is accompliſhed. Chriſt came not to deſtroy, but to fulfil the law [D], and its moral deſign is ſtill unaccompliſhed, and muſt ſo continue till the end of time, for "till heaven and earth paſs away, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled [E]." Our Saviour adds, ſtill ſpeaking of the law under one general conſideration, "whoſoever ſhall break one of theſe leaſt Commandments, and ſhall teach men ſo, he ſhall be called leaſt in the kingdom of Heaven; but whoſoever ſhall do and teach them, the ſame ſhall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven;" and he elſewhere annexes the promiſe of life to the obſervance of the moral law [F]. The apoſtles were ſo far from conſidering as aboliſhed any part of the Moſaic law, which had a moral character, that they expreſsly ratified and enjoined as neceſſary, injunctions not contained in the Decalogue, but which had only a moral tendency [G]. It follows then

[D] Matt. v. 17.

[E] Matt. v. 18. Luke xvi. 17.

[F] Matt. v. 19. x. 27, 28.

[G] Acts xv. The Apoſtles in the firſt council held at Jeruſalem, after having pronounced the ceremonial law to be burthenſome and unneceſſary, enjoined to the Gentiles, in the name of "the Holy Ghoſt," an obſervance of the Moſaic law, where it had a general character and moral tendency, and in the very terms, as well as in the ſpirit, of the Moſaic law, (conſidered diſtinctly from the Decalogue) they preſcribed unto

then from theſe conſiderations, that though the law be abrogated, as a covenant inſufficient and preparatory [H], though its ceremonies have vaniſhed as the veil and covering of ſpiritual things, and its judicial inſtitutions are diſſolved with the œconomy of the Hebrew government, its moral pillars remain unſhaken. The law then is aboliſhed only ſo far as fulfilled and ſuperſeded by a more excellent diſpenſation. As its precepts prefigured this, they have ter-

unto the Gentiles "as neceſſary things," that they ſhould abſtain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things ſtrangled, and from fornication; inaſmuch as theſe were deſcriptive of a diſpoſition to idolatry, and adopted in oppoſition to the ſervice of God. St. James concludes his advice, by intimating, that theſe inſtructions were permanent precepts of the law of Moſes, which was "read in every city." Vid. Acts xv. 1, 7, 10, 11, 19, 20, 21, 24, 28, 29. St. Paul, in his epiſtles, aſſerts the abrogation of the law, only as ſet up in oppoſition to the goſpel, to which it was "a ſchool-maſter" (or pedagogue). In compariſon of which it was "elementary and beggarly;" but in reference to which, and in its moral and ſpiritual character, it was "holy, juſt, and good." Vid. Rom. iii. 20, 24, 28, 31. viii. 4. Gal. iii. 24. iv. 9. 1 Tim. i. 8—10. v. 18. 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10. where a Moſaic precept not in the Decalogue is ſaid to be ſpoken "altogether for our ſakes." Vid. Deut. xxv. 4. In this, as in other inſtances, where a moral import is couched under a figurative precept, we may ſay with St. Ambroſe, "evacuatur in Chriſto, non vetus Teſtamentum, ſed velamen ejus." Epiſt. 76. Deut. xxii. 10. Rom. vii. 14. See, laſtly, xxiii. 56. where St. Paul admits the authority of a general precept, delivered in Exod. xxii. 28.

[H] We are freed alſo from the curſes of the law, "the miniſtration of death." Vid. Gal. iii. 13. 2 Cor. iii. 7. but not from its directive power.

minated;

minated; as its appointments prepared for this, they were exclusively confined to the Hebrew nation; as its commandments correspond with the moral designs of the gospel, they are incorporated with, and should be observed under, the Christian covenant.

The Mosaic dispensation, inasmuch as it was restricted to one nation, and contrived to effect its purpose, by partial regulations, cannot be supposed to have been productive of that liberal and diffusive benevolence which characterizes the gospel; which is a covenant designed to embrace all nations, and to promote universal love. But though the peculiar privileges, which the first covenant conferred on the Israelites, led them to entertain an arrogant and unreasonable conceit, it is certain that the Mosaic law recommended throughout as much benevolence as was consistent with that distinction, which it was intended to promote. The principles on which it is framed, may be always adopted with advantage, since it breathes throughout a fine spirit of moral equity; of merciful regard to strangers, and creditors, and bondsmen [I], and even to the brute creation [K]; and tends, by its literal and figurative precepts [L], to awaken benevolence and charitable dispositions.

The five books of Moses furnish us with a compendious history of the world, from the creation to

[I] Exod. xxi. 20, 21, 26, 27. Levit. xix. xxv. Deut. v. 14, 15. xv.

[K] Exod. xxiii. 12. Deut. v. 14. xxii. 6, 7.

[L] Deut. xxii. 10. xxv. 4.

the

the arrival of the Iſraelites, at the verge of Canaan, a period of above 2250 years. It is a wide deſcription, gradually contracted; an account of one nation, preceded by a general ſketch of the firſt ſtate of mankind. The books are written in pure Hebrew, with an admirable diverſity of ſtyle, always well adapted to the ſubject, yet characteriſed with the ſtamp of the ſame author; they are all evidently parts of the ſame work, and mutually ſtrengthen and illuſtrate each other. They blend revelation and hiſtory in one point of view, furniſh laws, and deſcribe their execution, exhibit prophecies, and relate their accompliſhment.

Besides the Pentateuch, Moſes is ſaid to have compoſed many of the Pſalms, and ſome have, though improperly, attributed to him all thoſe between the 90th and the 100th incluſive. He appears, however, to have been the firſt writer who was inſpired in the productions of ſacred hymns, and thoſe contained in the xvth chapter of Exodus, and the xxxiid of Deuteronomy, furniſh very beautiful models of his enraptured poetry. The book of Job has been with ſome probability ſuppoſed to have been written or tranſlated by Moſes, and many apocryphal works have been aſcribed to him, by writers deſirous of recommending their works under the ſanction of his name. Cedrenus transferred into his hiſtory, a book, which paſſed under the name of Moſes, ſtyled Little Geneſis [M], and which contained many ſpurious particulars. It was extant in

[M] Μικρὰ γενεσις.

Hebrew

Hebrew in the time of St. Jerom, and cited by him, but condemned as apocryphal, by the council of Trent. Others attribute to him an apocalypſe, from which they pretend, that St. Paul copied in ver. 15 of ch. vi. to the Galatians; but theſe, as well as thoſe entitled the aſcenſion, and the aſſumption of Moſes, and ſome myſterious books, were probably fabricated by the Sethians or Sethedians, an ancient ſect of Gnoſtic heretics, who pretended to be derived from Seth, and to poſſeſs ſeveral books of the Patriarchs [x].

[x] Athan. Synop.

OF THE

BOOK OF GENESIS.

THIS, which is the firſt book in order of the Pentateuch, is called Bereſchith in thoſe Hebrew copies, which adopt the diviſion of the Pentateuch into five books [A]. This word ſignifies the beginning, and was choſen for the title, in conformity to the Hebrew cuſtom of denominating the ſacred books from their initial words reſpectively. The book, however, is uſually entitled Geneſis, from a Greek word [B] which imports generation. It was written by Moſes, as the concurrent teſtimonies of all ages declare [C], as ſome ſuppoſe, in the land of Mi-

[A] Some private copies only are divided, thoſe uſed in the Jewiſh ſynagogues are not.

[B] Γενεσις. Generation, production. It is remarkable that the New Teſtament begins with the ſame word Βιβλος γενεσεως Ιησυ.

[C] Du Pin. Diſſ. Prel. Sect. I. Huet. The mention which is made in chap. xii. 6. and xiii. 7. of the Canaanites and Perizzites being then in the land, does not prove that the paſſages were written after the expulſion of theſe nations; nor does the expreſſion of "before there reigned any king in Iſrael," neceſſarily imply, that there were kings when the book was written. The account of the kings of Edom, which correſponds with that in the Book of Chronicles, was probably afterwards inſerted by ſome prophet, or authoriſed perſon.

dian,

dian, where Moſes fed the flocks of his father-in-law, in the wilderneſs, with deſign, it is ſaid, to comfort the Hebrews in their ſervitude, by the example of conſtancy in their fathers, and by a diſplay of the oracles and promiſes of God; as particularly in that remarkable revelation to Abraham, that "his ſeed ſhould be a ſtranger in a land not theirs, and ſhould ſerve them, and be afflicted 400 years, and that God ſhould judge that nation whom they ſhould ſerve, and afterwards they ſhould come out with great ſubſtance [D]." Euſebius [E] intimates his reſpect for this opinion, but Theodoret [F] and others ſuppoſe that the book was written in the wilderneſs after the promulgation of the law, and a third hypotheſis has been offered from the Rabbi Moſes Ben Nachman, that God dictated to Moſes all the contents of the Book during the forty days that he was permitted to have a communication with the deity on Mount Sinai, and that at his deſcent, he committed the whole to writing. It is, however, as impoſſible, as it is of little conſequence, to determine which of theſe opinions is beſt founded, and it is ſufficient for us to know, that Moſes was aſſiſted by the ſpirit of infallible truth, in the compoſition of this ſacred

[D] Gen. xv. 13, 14. From the birth of Iſaac to the deliverance from Egypt were 405 years. The 430 years mentioned in Exodus xii. 40. include the twenty-five years of Abraham's ſojourning in Canaan, before the birth of Iſaac. Vid. Patrick in loc.

[E] Euſeb. Præp. Evan. Lib. II. cap. 7.

[F] Theod. Quæſt. in Gen. Ven. Bede, &c.

work,

work [G], which he deemed a proper introduction to the laws and judgments delivered in the ſubſequent books.

The deſcription which Moſes furniſhes in this book, concerning the creation, as relating to circumſtances previous to the exiſtence of mankind, could be derived only from immediate revelation [H]. It was received by the Jews with full conviction of its truth, on the authority of that inſpiration, under which Moſes was known to act. But when the book was firſt delivered, many perſons then living muſt have been competent to decide on the fidelity with which he relates thoſe events, which were ſubſequent to the creation; they muſt have heard of, or diſbelieved the remarkable incidents in the lives of the Patriarchs, the prophecies which they uttered, and the actions which they performed; for the longevity of man in the earlier ages of the world, rendered tradition the criterion of truth; and in the days of Moſes, the channels of informations muſt have been as yet uncorrupted; for though ages had already elapſed, even 2432 years before the birth of the ſacred hiſtorian, yet thoſe relations were eaſily aſcertained, which might have been conveyed by ſeven perſons from Adam to Moſes, and that the traditions were ſo ſecure from error, we ſhall immediately be convinced, when we conſider that Methuſalem was 340 years old when Adam died, and that he lived till the year of the flood,

[G] Rom. iv. 3. Gal. iii. 8. Jam. ii. 23.
[H] Origen Homil. 26 in Numer.

when

when Noah had attained 600 years [I]. In like manner Shem conveyed tradition from Noah to Abraham, for he converſed with both a conſiderable time. Iſaac alſo, the ſon of Abraham, lived to inſtruct Joſeph in the hiſtory of his predeceſſors, and Amram, the father of Moſes, was contemporary with Joſeph [K]. The Iſraelites then muſt have been able, by intereſting tradition, to judge how far the Moſaic account was conſiſtent with truth [L]. If the memory of man reached beyond the period aſſigned to the creation, they muſt have diſbelieved the Moſaic hiſtory; but if through ſo ſmall a number of immediate predeceſſors, they could trace up the origin of mankind to Adam, we need not wonder at the implicit veneration which ratified the records of the ſacred hiſtorian; which accepted a revelation, confirmed by every received account, and ſtamped by every ſanction of divine authority. The ſacred

[I] Adam died, A. M. 930, 126 years only before the birth of Noah, and therefore muſt have been ſeen by many of Noah's contemporaries. Lamech, the father of Noah, had certainly ſeen Adam and his children, being born fifty-ſix years before Adam's death; and Noah himſelf might have ſeen ſeveral memorials exiſting, to prove the truth of thoſe events afterwards recorded by Moſes, for Noah died only two years before the birth of Abraham; and Iſaac might have ſeen Shem and Selah, who converſed with Noah many years.

[K] The tradition then was conveyed from Adam, through Methuſalah, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Iſaac, Joſeph, and Amram to Moſes, ſeven intermediate perſons. This account of the longevity of mankind, in the firſt ages of the world, is confirmed by Manetho, Beroſus, Mochus, Heſtæus, &c.

[L] Euſeb. Præp. Evang. Lib. IX. cap. ult.

character of the book is eſtabliſhed alſo by the internal evidence of its inſpiration; by the revealed hiſtory of the creation of the world; by the ſeveral predictions afterwards fully accompliſhed; and laſtly, by the ſuffrage of our Saviour and his apoſtles, who have cited from it at leaſt twenty-ſeven paſſages *verbatim* in the New Teſtament, and thirty-eight according to the ſenſe [M].

GENESIS contains the hiſtory of 2369 years to the death of Joſeph, or thereabouts, if we follow the account of the ages of the Patriarchs, and ſuppoſe the flood to have happened about 1656 years after the creation. It is perhaps ſcarce worth the trouble to obſerve, that ſome very futile objections have been made to the period which is aſſigned by Moſes to the creation, as though it were too recent to be reconciled with ſome natural appearances; for it has ever been found, upon accurate inveſtigation, that though the exiſtence of the world, according to the Moſaical account, be too ſhort [N], to be compatible

[M] As Rivet has accurately calculated.

[N] The creation of the world began, according to Uſher, on Sunday, October 23; before the birth of Chriſt 4004 years, if we follow the Hebrew text. The Septuagint verſion places it 5872, and the Samaritan 4700 before the vulgar æra. The Septuagint reckons 2262 years before the flood; the Samaritan only 1307. Vid. Jackſon's Chron. Tab. Aug. Civit. Dei, Lib. XII. Newton's Hiſt. of Antidel. World, p. 98. Strauchius Brev. Chron. tranſlated by Sault, p. 166, 176, &c. Capel. Chron. Sac. in Appar. Walton. Some place the creation about the time of the vernal equinox, ſince Moſes and the ſacred writers, reckon their firſt month Abib from that time.

ble with the theories of ſome fanciful men, yet that juſt philoſophical reaſoning has always tended to corroborate the aſſurance of the received date of the creation. The extended accounts of the Chaldean, Egyptian, Chineſe, and Hindus chronology, which reach far beyond all bounds of probability [o], and the magnified calculations of ſome other nations are now juſtly conſidered as the fictions of national vanity, or the exaggerations of erroneous computation. They are often in themſelves contradictory [p], and utterly inconſiſtent with all obſervations on the appearance of nature; all philoſophical enquiry; and the advancement of mankind in arts, ſciences, and refinement. Theſe improbable fabrications are delivered by authors who lived long after Moſes; whoſe veracity is impeached in other inſtances; and whoſe general accounts are inveloped in fable, and tinctured by credulity. The learned Halley has obſerved,

time. Vid. Virgil. Georg. II. l. 336. & ſeq. but this was in memory of their deliverance in Egypt. The firſt month in civil calculations was the firſt after the autumnal equinox; this was called Tiſri, and anſwers to part of our September.

[o] The Babylonians reckoned up 33,000 years; the Chaldeans in the time of Cicero talked of 47,000; and Manetho, jealous for the reputation of his country, carried back his chronological accounts to 36,525 years. Vid. Cicer. de Divin. Lib. I. Bryant's Mythol. vol. 3. Petav. &c. Maurice's Hiſtory of Hindoſtan.

[p] Manetho profeſſes to have tranſcribed his Dynaſties from ſome pillars of Hermes Triſmegiſtus. As Sanchoniatho alſo derived his theology from Hermes, different accounts muſt have been drawn from the ſame ſource. Vid. Stilling. Orig. Sac. Lib. I. cap. 2. The fountain or the ſtreams muſt have been corrupt.

that the oldeſt aſtronomical obſervations made by the Egyptians, of which we have any account at this day, were later than 300 years before Chriſt [Q.] The Chaldæan calculations are unworthy of attention, ſince they contradict the account of the flood, and are quite irreconcilcable with the general teſtimony of ancient hiſtory; and the chimerical accounts of the Chineſe, written in hieroglyphics, and reſcued imperfectly and with difficulty from deſtruction, cannot properly be produced in ſupport of any theory, repugnant to more authentic chronicles [R], much leſs can they be ſuffered to invalidate the chronology of the Scriptures. The incredible and con-

[Q] Sanchoniatho, the Phœnician Hiſtorian, according to the moſt extended accounts of Porphyry, flouriſhed long after Moſes, probably not leſs than two centuries. Manetho and Beroſus lived not more than 300 years before Chriſt. Vid. Bochart. Geogr. Sac. Part 2. Lib. II. cap. 17. Joſ. Scalig. Not. in Euſeb. Chron. p. 12. Præp. Evang. Lib. I. cap. 9. Lib. X. cap. 9. Scalig. Can. Iſag. Lib. III. Stilling. Orig. Sac. Book I. ch. ii. ſect. 4. Diod. Bib. Lib. I. Lact. de Orig. Error. Lib. II. cap. 12. Voſſ. de Idol. Lib. I. cap. 28. Wooton's Reflect. on Ant. and Mod. Learning, and Stackhouſe's Hiſt. of Bible, Book I. ch. 5.

[R] One of the Chineſe Emperors, about 213 years before Chriſt, ordered all their hiſtorical records to be deſtroyed. The Chineſe have not any work in an intelligible character, above 2200 years old; Father Amiot conſiders their nation as a colony, derived from the immediate deſcendants of Noah, and their traditional knowledge, and religious doctrines, when freed from ignorance and ſuperſtitious additions, exhibit a correſpondence with the Patriarchal principles. Vid. Martini. P. 2, 3, 9. Mem. de l'Hiſt. des Sciences, &c. Chinois, Vol. I. Par. 1776.

tradictory

tradictory accounts which theſe [s] nations furniſh, appear to have been ſwelled to ſo great a magnitude, by varying the modes of calculation, by ſeparating contemporary events, and by ſubſtituting lunar for ſolar periods. They are the miſrepreſentations of pride, or the errors of inattention, and unworthy to be put in competition with the accuracy and documents of revealed information [T].

EVERY

[s] The Greeks could produce no dates beyond 550 years before Chriſt, and little hiſtorical information before the olympiads, which began 775 years before Chriſt. Herodotus, who flouriſhed leſs than five centuries before our Saviour, begins with fable; Thucydides rejects, as uncertain, almoſt all that preceded the Peloponneſian war; and Plutarch ventured not beyond the time of Theſeus, who lived a little before the miniſtry of Samuel. Vid. Plutarch's Life of Theſeus. Strabo's Geograph. Lib. XVII.

[T] Some difficulties, equally futile and unreaſonable, have likewiſe been ſtarted againſt the probability of that account, which derives the whole race of mankind from one common ſtock, notwithſtanding the diverſity of complexion, and the ſeparation of country; but actual obſervation hath aſcertained that climate and local circumſtances are ſufficient to account for every diſſimilarity, which is diſcovered in the appearance of different nations. The ſuppoſed difficulties of emigration are likewiſe obviated by recent diſcoveries in geography: for theſe demonſtrate a much greater proximity in countries, between which no communication was conceived to exiſt in the earlier ages of the world, than obtains between thoſe from which early emigrations have confeſſedly been made, and thoſe to which they have been directed. It is now determined, by poſitive examination, that the north-eaſt part of Aſia is either connected with the north-weſt part of America, or ſeparated from it by a very inconſiderable diſtance; though, indeed, this diſcovery was not neceſſary to prove that the ſavage nations of the weſtern continent muſt have derived

EVERY circumſtance, indeed, in the Moſaic account, bears, if impartially conſidered, a ſtriking feature of probability and truth; and the whole is far different from the wild and inconſiſtent theories, which have at different times been imagined and framed by fanciful men [u]; whoſe crude and extravagant conjectures concerning the creation, only prove the impoſſibility of treating ſuch a ſubject with-

their origin from the ſame common ſource as the eaſtern nations; ſince not to inſiſt on the arguments for the recency of their eſtabliſhment, which might be drawn from their uncivilized ſtate, and their rude ignorance of the uſeful arts, they retained the veſtiges of opinions and cuſtoms, which were ſo remarkably ſimilar to thoſe that prevailed in the eaſt, as evidently to point out a former connection: a reverence for the Sabbath, and an acquaintance with many appointments of the Moſaic inſtitution, were obſerved to exiſt in America, by the firſt diſcoverers of that country, too numerous indeed to be the reſult of accident or caſual reſemblance; all the Americans had ſome traditionary acquaintance with the particulars of the Moſaic hiſtory; as of the flood; of one family preſerved; and of the confuſion of tongues. The Mexicans had a cuſtom of tinging the threſhold of the door with blood, poſſibly in alluſion to the circumſtances that diſtinguiſhed the inſtitution of the Paſſover, and the Canadians had even ſome idea of the Meſſiah. Huet. Demon. Evang. cap. vii. ſect. 3. Lerii Navig. in Braſil. cap. 16. Joann. de Laet. Antwerp. Not. ad Differt. Grot. de Orig. Gent. American. Acoſta's Hiſt. Lib. V. cap. 28. Peter Mart. Decad iv. cap. 8. and Decad viii. cap. 9. Geor. Horn. de Orig. Gent. American. Harris's Introd. to Collect. Voyage. Smith's Eſſay on the Cauſes of Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species. Herod. l. iv. c. 64. Sir William Jones's Diſcourſe on Origin and Families of Nations, Aſiatic Reſearches, vol. iii.

[u] Cudworth's Intel. Syſtem, and Coſmog. Pref. to Univ. Hiſt. Clarke's Demonſt. of Being and Attributes of God.

out

out the aid of inſpiration. Moſes deſcribes the great work of the creation, not in an exact philoſophical detail, but in a ſtyle adapted to popular apprehenſions, and with a conciſe magnificence, deſigned to impreſs mankind with juſt notions of God, and of his attributes [x]. The account is given without any attempt to eſtabliſh ſyſtem, and in a manner levelled to all capacities, though univerſally admired for its ſublimity. It repreſents the whole world to be material and created, in oppoſition to the prevailing notion, that the heavenly bodies were animated by an eternal power [y]. The divine agency is repreſented under images and deſcriptions accommodated to human conceptions, and though the real mode of God's operation and proceedings cannot be apprehended by us at preſent, they are in ſome meaſure ſubjected to our underſtanding, under analogous repreſentations, which illuſtrate their character. But notwithſtanding the nature of God's agency is adumbrated under terms and expreſſions adapted to human actions, the account of the creation is not to be conſidered as allegorical, or merely figurative, any more than the hiſtory of the temptation, and of the fall from innocence; ſince the whole deſcription

[x] Some think that the world was inſtantaneouſly created, though repreſented by Moſes, as performed in ſucceſſion of time, in accommodation to our conceptions, but it is more reaſonable and conſiſtent with the account to believe that it was completed in detail. Moſes ſpeaks of the creation of the univerſe, but treats of the heavenly bodies only ſo far as they reſpected the earth.

[y] Longin. de Sublim. ſect. 9.

is unqueſtionably delivered as real, and is ſo conſidered by all the ſacred writers [z]. In the explanation of ſcripture, indeed, no interpretation which tends to ſuperſede the literal ſenſe ſhould be admitted: and for this reaſon alſo it is, that thoſe ſpeculations which are ſpun out with a view to render particular relations in this book more conſiſtent with our ideas of probability, ſhould be received at leaſt with great diffidence and caution. To repreſent the formation of the woman from Adam's rib, as a work performed in an imaginary ſenſe, or as pictured to the mind in viſion, ſeems to be too great a departure from the plain rules which ſhould be obſerved in the conſtruction of ſcripture [A], and inconſiſtent with the expoſitions of the ſacred writers. So likewiſe the wreſtling of Jacob with an angel [B], though ſometimes conſidered as a ſcenical repreſentation addreſſed to the fancy of the Patriarch, ſhould rather be contemplated like the temptation of Abraham [C], as

[z] John viii. 44. 2 Cor. xi. 3. 1 Tim. ii. 13. Rev. xii. 9. Allix's Reflect. on Gen. Waterland's Gen. Pref. to Script. Vind. Watty's Eſſay towards Vindic. of Moſaic Hiſt. Nichols's Confer. with a Theiſt. Part I. p. 136. Bochart de Scrip. Tentat. p. 836.

[A] Gen. i. 22, 23. This is related by Moſes as a real operation, though performed while Adam was in a deep ſleep, and is ſo conſidered by the ſacred writers. 1 Cor. xi. 8, 9.

[B] Ch. xxxii. 24, 25.

[C] Ch. xxii. The enjoined ſacrifice of Iſaac is properly conſidered as a typical repreſentation, which was underſtood by Abraham to prefigure the ſacrifice of Chriſt. Vid. John viii. 56. But it cannot be admitted, that the command was merely an information by action given at the requeſt of Abraham, as this, notwithſtanding

as a literal tranſaction, though perhaps of a figurative character; like that, it was deſigned to convey information by action inſtead of words, of certain particulars which it imported the Patriarch to know [D]; and which he readily collected from a mode of revelation, ſo cuſtomary in the earlier ages of the world, however it may ſeem incongruous to thoſe who cannot raiſe their minds to the contemplation of any œconomy which they have not experienced, and who proudly queſtion every event not conſiſtent with their notions of propriety.

AFTER having related the diſobedience of Adam, and its puniſhment, ſoftened by the gracious promiſe of a future ſeed, that ſhould bruiſe the ſeducer to ſin [E], Moſes deſcribes the multiplication of man-

withſtanding the arguments of the learned Warburton, muſt be conſidered as inconſiſtent with the paſſages in ſcripture, where God is ſaid to have tempted Abraham. Gen. xxii. 1. Heb. xi. 17. Vide Div. Legat. Book VI. ſect. 5.

[D] Ch. xxxii. 24, 25. The ſucceſsful ſtruggle which Jacob maintained, was intended to convey to him an aſſurance of that deliverance from the hand of Eſau, which he had piouſly intreated; it is repreſented as an actual event by Moſes, and is ſo received by Hoſea, ch. xii. 4. St. Jerom underſtands it as figurative of ſpiritual conflicts which we are to maintain. Hieron. in cap. 6. Epiſt. ad Epheſ.

[E] Gen. iii. 15. It is remarkable that in this firſt prophecy of the Meſſiah, he is promiſed as the "ſeed of the woman." The Jews were at a loſs to account for the reſtriction, of which the reaſon is revealed to us in the account of the miraculous conception of Chriſt by a virgin. It deſerves to be noticed, that the bruiſing of the Meſſiah's heel was literally accompliſhed by the crucifixion. The head likewiſe of the ſerpent is ſaid to be the ſeat of life, his heart being under the throat, and hence, his chief care, when attacked, is to ſecure his head.

kind,

kind, and the evil conſequences of the entailed corruption; the intermixture of the deſcendants of Seth, "the ſons of God," with the family of Cain, "the daughters of men;" the progreſs of impiety, and its puniſhment; the preſervation of Noah, and of his family, from amidſt the general deſtruction by the flood; he proceeds to treat of God's covenant with man; of the diſperſion of the deſcendants of Noah; of the confuſion of tongues; of the covenant made with Abraham; of the deſtruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; and of ſuch particulars in the lives of the Patriarchs, as were beſt calculated to illuſtrate the proceedings and judgments of God, the conſequences of human actions, and the riſe and progreſs of religion; and he concludes with the intereſting ſtory of Joſeph, and of the ſettlement of the Iſraelites in Egypt. Thus have we a clear, though ſhort, hiſtory of the firſt ages of the world, which prophane writers had vainly endeavoured to reſcue from the ſhades of antiquity. The whole is related with a conciſe and noble ſimplicity of ſtyle ſuitable to the dignity of the ſubject. The ſacred writer, anxious only to furniſh important intelligence, deſcribes the earlier periods with rapidity, and dilates more copiouſly on the intereſting tranſactions of which the effects and influence were recently experienced. In the haſty ſketch, however, even of the firſt ages, Moſes by the ſelection of individual families for conſideration, delineates a ſtriking picture of the manners of each period; and by occaſionally deſcending to the minuteneſs of biography, affords a lively illuſtration of the

ſmaller

ſmaller features, and familiar manners of the Patriarchal ages.

In the courſe of his hiſtory, Moſes deſcribes events as they occurred, and characters as they appeared. The actions of the patriarchs and favourite anceſtors of the Jews, however exceptionable, and even the deceitful cruelty of Levi, (from whom the hiſtorian was deſcended,) as alſo the curſes denounced againſt him [F], are related without diſguiſe. One circumſtance muſt, however, be remembered by thoſe who would underſtand the ſcope and deſign of the ſacred writer, in furniſhing us with particular relations contained in this book, which is, that he always kept in mind the promiſe of the Meſſiah; and was deſirous of ſhewing, that the expectation of this great object of the Jewiſh hopes was predominant in all times, and influenced the opinions and manners of every generation. The recollection of this will furniſh the reaſon of many particulars mentioned in the book, which might otherwiſe appear extraordinary and exceptionable. It will explain the conduct of Lot's daughters [G]; the violent deſire of Sarah for a

[F] Ch. xxxiv. 13—25. xlix. 5, 6.

[G] R. Samuel and R. Tanchumah, on Gen. xix. 32. This inceſt certainly proceeded from a deſire of producing the Meſſiah: as Lot's daughters were previouſly diſtinguiſhed for chaſtity; as it was a concerted and deliberate proceeding; and as they wiſhed to perpetuate the memory of the action, by the names which they gave the children; for Moab implies born of my father, and Ben-ammi has a ſimilar import. Vid. Allix's Reflect. on Gen.

ſon;

ſon; the ſolicitude of Iſaac to remove the barrenneſs of Rebekah; and the contention between the wives of Jacob. In conformity with this deſign alſo Moſes relates the jealouſies between Iſhmael and Iſaac; and between Eſau and Jacob; and many other minute and ſingular particulars, which an hiſtorian of his dignity would not have condeſcended to deſcribe, but with a view to illuſtrate the general perſuaſion of, and gradual preparation for, the coming of the Meſſiah.

THE book contains likewiſe ſome ſignal and direct prophecies concerning Chriſt [H]; and other interſperſed predictions; which by their accompliſhment authenticate the truth of the ſcripture accounts. Moſes deſcribes, alſo, the predictions of other perſons, who were occaſionally enlightened by the Holy Spirit, to unfold parts of the divine œconomy, and to keep alive the confidence and hopes of mankind, "delivering the prophecies which have been uttered ever ſince the world began [I]."

IT may be briefly obſerved, that many particulars in pagan hiſtory, as well as many circumſtances in the preſent appearance of the world, both natural and moral, tend to prove the truth of thoſe accounts which are furniſhed in this book. Innumerable

[H] Gen. iii. 15. xii. 3. xviii. 18. xxi. 12. xxii. 18. xxvi. 4. xxviii. 14. xlix. 10, 18.

[I] Gen. vi. 3. ix. 25—27. xiii. 15, 16. xv. 5, 13—16. xvi. 12. xvii. 8, 20. xviii. 14. xxi. 12, 13. xxv. 23. xxvi. 4. xxvii. 29, 39, 40. xxxv. 11. xl. 13, 18, 19. xli. 29—31. xlvi. 4. xlviii. 19. xlix. 3—27. l. 24.

traces

traces of the Moſaic hiſtory, and of the events and characters which it deſcribes, are diſcoverable in every page of prophane authors. The ſpot on which Sodom and Gomorrah ſtood, ſtill indicates a ſulphureous quality [K], and daily veſtiges of the deluge point out its extenſive effects. The various manners, cuſtoms, and ſuperſtitions of many ancient nations, unchanged during a long ſucceſſion of ages, ſtill remain to prove the fidelity and exactneſs of the deſcriptions given by Moſes [L]; and in the predominant genius

[K] The lake Aſphaltites is a ſea of very bituminous nature; it throws up great quantities of aſphaltos, a drug formerly uſed by the Egyptians and other nations for embalming, &c. Vid. Maundrell. Pocock. Univer. Hiſt. Vol. II. Book I. ch. vii. p. 418. Keill's Exam. of Reflect. on Theor. p. 148. Waterland's Pref. to Vind. Jenkins's Reaſon. Vol. II. p. 526. alſo Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. I. cap. 9. Plin. Nat. Hiſt. Lib. V. cap. 16. and Taciti Hiſt. Lib. V. ſect. 7. The account of the latter author is remarkable. He relates that the plains where the cities ſtood, were ſaid, "olim uberes, magniſque urbibus habitatos, fulminum jactu arſiſſe: et manere veſtigia, terramque ipſam ſpecie torridam, vim frugiferam perdidiſſe. Nam cuncta ſponte edita, aut manu ſata, ſive herba tenus aut flore, ſeu ſolitam in ſpeciem adolevere, atra & inania velut in cinerem vaneſcunt." He adds, "Ego ſicut inclitas quondam urbes igne cœleſti flagraſſe conceſſerim, ita halitu lacus infici terram, corrumpi ſuperfuſum ſpiritum, eoque fœtus ſegetum et autumni putreſcere reor, ſolo cœloque juxta gravi." Vid. alſo Strabo's Geogr. Lib. XVI. Thevenot's Travels and Volney's Voyage en Syrie, &c. Vol. I. p. 281. Wood's Eſſay on Homer, p. 51, note (h).

[L] His geographical accounts are conſiſtent with the moſt authentic memorials. Vid. Joſeph. Grotius and Bochart. Harmer's Obſervations on divers paſſages of Script. &c. Huet. Demon. Prop. IV. Avenarius in verbo Jarek.

and

and diſpoſition of the modern Jews, we witneſs a wonderful correſpondence with the picture of their ancient character. No length of time, or difference of condition, hath been able to efface thoſe ſtrong features of national peculiarity which are imprinted on this ſingular people, and which ſhew themſelves ſo remarkably in their prejudices, conduct, and manners, in different countries, and under different governments. The reaſon and ground of their obſervances and ceremonies, are traced out in this book; and though in the ſubſequent parts of the Pentateuch the laws are laid down by which their civil and religious conduct are influenced, yet here chiefly are deſcribed the cauſes and ſource from which they are derived, as may be inſtanced in the caſes of the Sabbath, and of the Circumciſion [M], not to mention other particulars. Geneſis was, indeed, very properly prefixed to thoſe books in which Moſes communicated the divine commands, ſince herein are diſplayed the moſt impreſſive proofs of God's exiſtence and attributes, and herein is ſhewn the authority from which Moſes derived his commiſſion as a law-giver; and it was therefore probably written as preparatory to the promulgation of the law [N]. It is likewiſe excellently ſerviceable to illuſtrate the great deſign and tendency of revelation; which is ever delivered in a manner conformable to the fallen and depraved na-

[M] Allix's Reflections on Geneſis, republiſhed in Bp. Watſon's Theological Tracts. Vid. ch. xxxii. 32. Euſeb. Præp. Evan. Lib. VII. ch. 9.

[N] Euſeb. Præp. Evan. ch. ii. Iſid. Peluſiot.

ture of man. It deſcribes the origin of a diſtinct immaterial Spirit, derived immediately from God; and the firſt inſtitution of the marriage union. It points out the true ſource of evil, in an account conſiſtent with the divine attributes, and confirmed by the character and appearance of mankind in every age. Every moral diſcourſe, as every religious ſyſtem, muſt be built on the foundation and conviction that man was created in innocence, but degraded by ſin; and hence he is ſuſceptible of good, and prone to evil [o]. On account of the dignity and importance of the ſubject, and of the ſerious attention which it deſerved, the Jews were forbidden to read the beginning of Geneſis till they had attained the ſacerdotal age of thirty years. A work, indeed, which deſcribes the firſt creation and lapſe of man; which treats of God's counſels and intercourſe with his creatures; which opens the proſpect of redemption, and the grand ſcheme of prophecy; and exemplifies the high obligations and intereſts of man, cannot be conſidered with too mature and deliberate judgment.

[o] Wolſeley's Reaſon of Chriſtian Religion, p. 152.

OF THE

BOOK OF EXODUS.

THE title of the ſecond Book of Moſes is, likewiſe, deſcriptive of its contents. The word Exodus [A], which is of Greek original, implies emigration; and the book relates the departure of the Iſraelites out of Egypt, after a previous deſcription of their ſtate of ſervitude, of the appointment of Moſes, and of the miracles by which he effected their deliverance. It preſents us alſo with the account of their journey through the wilderneſs; of the ſolemn promulgation of the law at mount Sinai; of the delivery of the Decalogue; and of the building of the Tabernacle. It is univerſally allowed to have been written by Moſes; and the words of Exodus are cited as the words of Moſes, by Daniel, David, and other ſacred writers; to whom it is uſeleſs to refer, ſince our Saviour himſelf always diſ-

[A] From Ἔξοδος, a departure, or going out. It is called by the Jews, Ve-elleh Semoth; that is, "theſe are the names," which are the initial words of the book.

tinguiſhes

tinguiſhes the law (by which the whole Pentateuch is implied) from the prophets, as the work of Moſes; and Rivet has obſerved, that twenty-five paſſages are quoted by Chriſt and his apoſtles out of this book in expreſs words, and nineteen as to the ſenſe, and this will be found not to be an exaggerated account.

Exodus contains an hiſtory of about 145 years, or perhaps of a ſomewhat ſhorter period. Many of the circumſtances therein recorded are confirmed by the teſtimony of heathen writers [B]. This, perhaps, it is unneceſſary to mention, for our conviction of the truth of its relations is built on much higher evidence. The intrinſic marks of ſincerity in the ſacred writings are uſually too numerous to require any additional ſupport.

This book contains ſome predictions, of which it relates alſo the accompliſhment; as that of the deliverance of the Jews, which Moſes foreſaw [C] and effected. It likewiſe deſcribes ſome which were not fulfilled till after his death, as that concerning the conqueſt of Canaan [D], and the future diviſion and

[B] Numenius ſpeaks of the oppoſition of the Egyptian magicians to the miracles of Moſes. The Exodus under Moſes is mentioned by Palemon and Chæremon; (as cited by Africanus in Euſebius; by Manetho; (vid. Joſeph. cont. Apion, Lib. I.) by Trogus Pompeius; and by Tacitus, with ſome abſurd additions from perverted information. Vid. Tacit. Hiſt. Lib. V. §. 3. Other writers, as eſpecially Orpheus, in the verſes aſcribed to him, ſpeak of the delivery of the two tablets of the law from God, and of the inſtitution of the Hebrew rites. Diodor. Sic. l. xl.

[C] Exodus vii. 4, 5.

[D] Chap. xv. 14—17. xxiii. 22, 23, 31. xxxiii. 2.

allotment of the land [E]; and alſo thoſe which related to the revolutions that were to take place in the government of the Jews: their future ſubjections, captivities, deliverances, and returns.

It may throw ſome light upon this book, as well as contribute to our general admiration of ſcripture, if we obſerve, that the events recorded to have happened under the old diſpenſation are often ſtrikingly prefigurative of thoſe which occur under the new; and that the temporal circumſtances of the Iſraelites ſeem deſignedly to ſhadow out the ſpiritual condition of the chriſtian church. The connection is ever obvious, and points out the conſiſtency of the divine purpoſe, and the harmony deliberately contrived to ſubſiſt between both diſpenſations. Thus in the ſervitude of Iſrael are deſcribed the ſufferings of the church. In the deliverance from Egypt is foreſhewn its redemption [F]; and the journey through the wilderneſs is a lively repreſentation of a chriſtian's pilgrimage through life, to his inheritance in everlaſting bliſs. So alſo, without too minute a diſcuſſion, it may be obſerved, that the manna of which the Iſraelites did eat [G], and the rock of which

[E] Moſes alſo here predicted the conſtant miracle of protection during the time of worſhip three times every year, at the feaſt of the Paſſover, at that of Pentecoſt, and at that of Tabernacles. Vid. Exod. xxxiv. 23, 24. the accompliſhment of which predictions furniſhed reiterated evidence of the divine authority of the Moſaic law.

[F] Zacharias applies the very words of the temporal to the ſpiritual deliverance. Luke i. 68—79.

[G] John vi. 33—38. Rev. ii. 17.

they

they drank [H], as well as the brazen ſerpent by which they were healed, were ſeverally typical of correſpondent particulars that were to obtain under the chriſtian eſtabliſhment [I]; as under the ſacrifices and ceremonial ſervice of the church, of which the inſtitution is here recorded, was deſcribed the more ſpiritual worſhip of the goſpel [K].

IT is neceſſary farther to remark, that if we would underſtand the reaſon and intention of many injunctions contained in this book, we muſt recollect, that the great deſign, with which they were framed, was to preſerve the Iſraelites a diſtinct and independent people, and to prevent their communications with other nations; leſt they, who were to be entruſted with the ſacred depoſit of the inſpired writings, and from whom, as from the ſeed of Abraham, the Meſſiah was to ariſe, ſhould catch the infection of idolatry; or by mingling with the Gentiles, render the accompliſhment of the promiſes doubtful. The many cautions againſt idolatry, and the precepts levelled againſt whatever might tend to promote its influence [L]; the nice diſcriminations, the peculiar and alienating prohibitions, which reſtrained the Iſraelites from aſſociating with other nations, and the

[H] 1 Cor. x. 1—6. Gal. iv. 22, 24. Col. ii. 17.

[I] St. Jerom carries theſe ideas to a very fanciful extreme. Vid. Hieron. de 42. Manſion. de Veſte Sacerdot. &c.

[K] Heb. x.

[L] Maimon. More Nevoch. P. II. c. xxxvii. and Levit. xix. 19, 27, 28. xxi. 3. which paſſages contain laws that were probably directed againſt idolatrous and ſuperſtitious practices. Vid. Spencer de Leg. Heb. c. 20.

political inſtitutions deſigned to attach them to their country, were all deviſ[illegible] with a view to the accompliſhment of this important deſign. And as not only the country, not only the tribe, but the individual family was foretold, from which the Meſſiah ſhould ſpring, it was requiſite to aſcertain exactly the lineage and deſcent of each. Hence are the ſeeds of jealouſy induſtriouſly ſown between the different tribes, and the younger preferred to the elder. Under this idea the laws which were enjoined to aſcertain the virginity of the maidens will be judged neceſſary; and the puniſhment decreed againſt adultery will not appear diſproportioned or ſevere. Theſe inſtances are produced only by way of illuſtration; and by attending to the views of God in the eſtabliſhment of this religious polity, we ſhall always find much cauſe to admire the wiſdom of his laws [M]; though, indeed, we are too little acquainted with the ancient manners of the Hebrew nation, and of other nations with whom it was connected, to underſtand the full ſcope and importance of every particular injunction.

[M] Maimon, More Nevoch, Pars II. cap. xxvi. xxxvii.

OF THE

BOOK OF LEVITICUS.

THE third book in the order of the Pentateuch is called Leviticus [A], in the Latin and Engliſh Bibles, becauſe in it are deſcribed the office and duties of the Levites; or rather agreeably to the account of Biſhop Patrick, becauſe it contains the laws of the Jewiſh rites and religious ſacrifices, of which the charge was committed to Aaron the Levite, and to his deſcendants, who were conſecrated by divine appointment to the prieſthood; being aſſiſted in the performance of their ſacred office by a ſecond branch of Levi's family, which, by an appropriate title, was called the tribe of Levi [B]; and which obtained the privilege of officiating as a ſecond order of the prieſthood, in recompence of the ready zeal that it diſplayed againſt idolatry, and the worſhippers of the golden calf [C].

THE

[A] Λευϊτικον, in the Greek.

[B] Godwyn's Moſes and Aaron, Lib. I. c. v. Heb. vii. 11.

[C] Aaron was appointed to the prieſthood before the idolatrous proceeding here alluded to. What oppoſition he made

THE Jews, according to their cuſtom, denominate the book from the firſt word in the Hebrew [ד]; and imagine, in agreement with ſome fanciful notions of the Jewiſh Maſorites, from the particular ſize of one letter in the word, that it has ſome myſterious ſignification; but theſe conceits it would perhaps be ſomewhat difficult to explain, and but of little uſe to diſcuſs.

THAT Moſes was the author of this Book is proved, not only by the general arguments that demonſtrate him to have written all the Pentateuch, but by particular paſſages in other books of ſcripture, wherein it is expreſsly cited as his inſpired

to the perverſe inclinations of the people is not mentioned. He appears to have been compelled to ſubmit; and probably he deſigned to diſcountenance the idolaters by chooſing as a ſymbol of the divine preſence, one of thoſe very images which they knew to have provoked God's anger againſt the Egyptians. There were three orders in the Hebrew prieſthood; the Prieſts, the Levites, and the Nethinims. The Levites inſtructed the people, were employed in taking care of the tabernacle, and afterwards of the temple and the ſacred books: they were likewiſe joined with the prieſts in deciding on caſes of leproſy, and in judging ceremonial cauſes: they had no appropriate portion or inheritance, but ſubſiſted by the altar, ſcattered among the reſt of the tribes, agreeably to the prediction of Jacob. Vid. Gen. xlix. 7. The Nethinims were deſcendants of the Gibeonites, condemned by Joſhua for their deceit to menial and ſervile attendance on the Prieſts. Vid. Joſhua ix. they were called Nethinims, from נתן, Nathan, to give; as given to the ſervice of the temple.

[ד] ויקרא, Vai-jikrah et clamavit.

work.

work [E]. The laws of rites and ceremonies which it contains, were delivered from God to Moſes in the firſt month of the ſecond year after the departure from Egypt; that is, about A. M. 2514. They are communicated in a plain and perſpicuous ſtile; the precepts are fully and circumſtantially given: and their minute particulars are often repeated, and inſiſted on as important, and expreſſive of ſomething beyond the mere letter. That the Levitical law had a covert and myſterious ſignification, is, indeed, juſtly allowed by all judicious commentators; the whole ſervice had a ſpiritual meaning; and its inſtitutions, ſacraments, and ceremonies were unqueſtionably prefigurative of goſpel appointments [F]. Thus its ſacrifices and oblations which, if performed in faith and obedience, were to conciliate forgiveneſs of ſins [G], have been juſtly conſidered as ſignificant of the atonement to be made by Chriſt. The requiſite qualities of theſe ſacrifices

[E] 2 Chron. xxx. 16. Jerem. vii. 22, 23. ix. 16. Ezek. xx. 11. Matt. viii. 4. Rom. x. 5. xiii. 9. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Gal. iii. 12. 1 Pet. i. 16. and Baruch, ch. ii. 29.

[F] John xix. 36.

[G] Ezek. xx. 11. Rom. x. 5. Gal. iii. 12. Shuckford's Con. vol. III. b. xi. Theſe were to conciliate forgiveneſs only, in virtue of Chriſt's ſacrifice, and on the conditions of faith in God's promiſes, and of obedience to his laws. The Jews underſtood the conditions, however they might be ignorant of the nature of Chriſt's meritorious atonement, and however they might have been at length miſled to attribute to their legal ſacrifices a real efficacy, and power of effecting reconciliation and pardon in a future life.

were emblematical of Chriſt's immaculate character. The mode alſo preſcribed as neceſſary in the form of theſe offerings, and the myſtical rites ordained, were alluſive inſtitutions calculated to enlighten the apprehenſions of the Jews, and to prepare them for the reception of the goſpel [H]. Thus likewiſe, as might have been obſerved in the account of the preceding book, the ark of the covenant, the whole ſtructure of the tabernacle, the prieſthood and its decorations, were all appoſite emblems of correſpondent circumſtances, appropriate to a ſcheme of more perfect deſcription [I]. So alſo in a leſs important ſenſe were the outward rites and purgations enjoined by the Moſaic law, deſigned to intimate the neceſſity of inward purity [K]. Thus the whole ſervice, like the veil on the face of Moſes, concealed a ſpiritual radiance under an outward covering; and the internal import bearing a preciſe and indiſputable reference to future circumſtances and events, is ſtamped with the indelible proofs of Divine contrivance [L].

THESE ideas, however, though juſt, muſt not be overſtrained, ſince the fancy, if unreined, is apt to run into exceſs; and the interpretation of the ritual law has been, perhaps, too uncontrouled, particu-

[H] Heb. xiii. 11, 12. The Iſraelites muſt have had at leaſt ſome indiſtinct idea of this ſpiritual reference. Vid. 1 Cor. x. 1—4.

[I] Heb. viii. 5. ix. 8, 9.

[K] Numb. xix. 13, 19. Deut. x. 16. xxx. 6. Heb. x. 22. xii. 24. 1 Pet. i. 2. Rom. ii. 28, 29. 1 Cor. vii. 19.

[L] Exod. xxxiv. 33. 2 Cor. iii. 13.

larly

larly by its earlier expoſitors, who have ſometimes built their explanations more on fanciful alluſion, than on real analogy, and true connection [M]. It may be remarked alſo, that ſome of theſe ceremonial laws ſeem to have been impoſed as a puniſhment on account of the frequent tranſgreſſions of a rebellious people [N]; or rather as a yoke or curb to reſtrain them from idolatry [O], as well as to diſcriminate them from all other nations; which purpoſe they effectually ſerved in all their diſperſions and captivities; and intereſting their affections in favour of a religion, the practice of which was interwoven with the whole conduct of their life [P]. The ſanctimonious obſervances, likewiſe, and the frequent purifications enjoined by the Levitical law, were deſigned to keep up a reverential awe of the divine majeſty, which was ſuppoſed perſonally to reſide among this favoured people; and to impreſs them with an idea of the great holineſs which was requiſite to qualify them to approach God's preſence. So alſo, the diſtinctions between clean and unclean beaſts, the regulations concerning leproſy and impurities, deliberately or caſually contracted, were ſo minutely and forcibly enacted, in order to inculcate into the minds of the Iſraelites their peculiar

[M] Heſych. Com.

[N] Gal. iii. 19. 1 Tim. i. 8—10. Irenæ. Hæreſ. Lib. IV. c. xxviii. Lactant. de Vera Sapient. Lib. IV. c. x. Spencer de Legib. Hebræ. Lib. I. c. iv.

[O] Lowman's Hebrew Worſhip, &c. Vid. ch. xix. 26, 28. Spencer de Leg. Lib. II. Ezek. xx. 24, 25.

[P] Juvenal, Sat. XIV. l. 103, 104. Tacit. Hiſt. Lib. V. §. 5. Grot. de Jur. Bell. Lib. II. 15. 9. Chryſoſt. Hom. in Gen. xxxix.

appro-

appropriation to God's ſervice [q]. The multiplied ceremonies, however, and complicated rites which were eſtabliſhed in conſequence of theſe deſigns, were certainly ſo burdenſome, that nothing but a conviction of their divine original could have influenced any people to receive them; eſpecially as the wiſdom of their ſpiritual import was not underſtood at firſt, but only gradually unfolded by the interpretations of the prophets. But the ceremonial law, though in fact "a yoke too heavy to be born," and completely obeyed, was, nevertheleſs, well [r] adapted to the time and circumſtances under which it was delivered, and to the dull and perverſe nation for which it was deſigned [s]. It was likewiſe perfect as to its ſpiritual intention and final views, as a figurative and temporary diſpenſation. The tranſient [t] character of its ceremonies was not explained at firſt, leſt they ſhould be undervalued; but as ſoon as this religious ſyſtem was eſtabliſhed, its true nature began to appear to the people. Their inſpired teachers inſtructed them, that ſacrifices and oblations for ſin were figurative atonements of little value in the eyes of God, if unaccompanied by that faith and by thoſe qualifications which he required [u]; as alſo that the outward

[q] Levit. xx. 25, 26.

[r] Acts xv. 10. Gal. v. 1.

[s] Deut. xxxii. 28. Jerem. iv. 22. Barrow's 15th ſermon on the Imperfection of the Jewiſh Religion. Matt. xix. 8.

[t] Pſam xix. 7—11. Pſalm cxix.

[u] Jerem. vi. 20. vii. 21—23. Iſaiah i. 11—17. lviii. 6, 7. lxiii. 1—3. Hoſea vi. 6. Micah vi. 6—8. Amos v. 21—24. Pſalm l. 8—14. li. 16, 17.

puri-

purifications and obſervances commanded by the Moſaic law, were deſigned to illuſtrate the importance of internal righteouſneſs [x].

The ſacrifices, as well eucharitical as expiatory, of which the regulations are preſcribed in this book, were by no means firſt inſtituted by the Moſaic law, but appear to have been adopted, probably by divine appointment, as the earlieſt mode of worſhip; and they were offered up by our firſt parents [y], as an acceptable acknowledgment of God's attributes, and in becoming profeſſion of human ſubmiſſion and humility. They were eſtabliſhed, however, under the Moſaic diſpenſation, upon their true principles, and commanded with [z] circumſtances that gave them additional importance, and which ſerved to illuſtrate their real character and intention. They were ordained as an atonement for the breach of the ritual laws [a], and delivered the people from thoſe civil and eccleſiaſtical puniſhments to which they were expoſed from the wrath of God, conſidered as a political governor. They "ſanctified to the purifying of the fleſh," waſhed away legal

[x] Pſalm l. 8—15. li. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xv. 22. Prov. xv. 8. Hoſea vi. 6. Iſaiah i. 11—17. lviii. 6, 7. Zech. vii. 5—10. Rom. ii. 28, 29. Vid. alſo Euſeb. Præp. Evang. Lib. VIII. c. 9, 10, & Lib. II. c. 17.

[y] Gen. iv. 3, 4. Heb. xi. 4.

[z] Heb. ix. x. 1—14.

[a] Falſehood, fraud, and violence, though offences againſt the moral law, might be atoned for by a treſpaſs-offering to God as a civil ruler, but only on condition of ample reparation to the injured party, which evinced a ſincerity of repentance. Lev. vi. 1—7.

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defilements, but were never intended to wipe off the ſtains of moral guilt, or to avert God's anger againſt ſin, except as figurative of that perfect atonement at the coming of which "ſacrifice and oblation ſhould ceaſe [B]." They were commemorative acknowledgments of guilt, and typical pledges only of a ſufficient ſacrifice.

The hiſtory of the Iſraelites advances about one month in this book, which, like the reſt, blends inſtruction and narration in one intereſting account. It deſcribes the conſecration of Aaron and his ſons; the daring impiety and inſtant puniſhment of Nadab and Abihu; and the ſtoning of the blaſphemer; particulars, which illuſtrate God's care for religion, and the jealous ſeverity by which he kept up among the Iſraelites a reverence for his name. The relation alſo is animated with ſome ſignal predictions that ſtamp the work with additional marks of inſpiration. Moſes reveals to the people their future diſperſion among the heathen nations; their diſtreſs, and decline, and deſolation; and yet conſoles them with the promiſe of mercy to be mingled with puniſhment, in their miraculous preſervation [C]. The book contains likewiſe one moſt remarkable prophecy [D], the accompliſhment of which was a ſtanding miracle among the Iſraelites, and which for many ages continued to furniſh an aſſurance of the divine authority and inſpiration of Moſes. He here foretold that every

[B] Pſalm xl. 6, 7. Dan. ix. 27. Heb. vii. 19. ix. 9.

[C] Chap. xxvi. the whole of which is a collection of prophetic threats, that were ſtrikingly fulfilled.

[D] Chap. xxv. 20—22.

fixth

ſixth year ſhould produce ſuperfluous plenty to ſupply the deficiencies of the ſeventh or ſabbatical year, when the land was to remain "unſown, and the vineyards unpruned [E];" and this effectually came to paſs: the obſervance of the law being invariably provided for while it continued to be reverenced. The ſame aſſurance was likewiſe given of a ſpontaneous ſupply to remedy the inconveniencies which would otherwiſe have reſulted from that neglect of cultivation of the land which was enjoined for every 49th or 50th year [F]; and to this was annexed a threat, that the land ſhould be brought into deſolation, and the people be ſcattered among the heathen, there to remain for as long a time as they ſhould have neglected the laws of the ſabbath and jubilee [G]: Threats remarkably accompliſhed in the ſeventy years captivity at Babylon.

[E] Chap. xxv. 2—9.

[F] Chap. xxv. 8—12. 20—23. The jubilee year either coincided with the ſeventh ſabbatical year, or was provided for by additional abundance in the 48th year. Vid. Cunæus, &c. Repub. Heb. c. vi. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. III. c. x. J. Scaliger, de Emend. Temp. Lib. V.

[G] Levit. xxvi. 34, 35. If we ſuppoſe theſe laws to have been neglected from the beginning of the reign of Saul, A. M. 2909, to the fourth year of Jehoiakim, A. M. 3398, which is probably the true period, the ſeventy years captivity will exactly allow time for the completion of the reſt, proportionate to the ſpace of 490 years, during which the laws were violated. It is remarkable, that the Jews were carried away captive towards the concluſion of the ſabbatical year. Vid. Maimon. Schemitta ve Jobel. cap. x. ſect. 3.

OF THE

BOOK OF NUMBERS.

THIS Book is called the Book of Numbers, becauſe it contains an account of the numbering or muſtering of the people; or rather, indeed, of two numberings: the firſt in the beginning of the ſecond year after their departure from Egypt; the ſecond in the plains of Moab, towards the concluſion of their journey in the wilderneſs [A]. The Jews entitle the book, Vaie-dabbēr, which in the Hebrew is the initial word; and which ſome, conceiving it to imply the mercy-ſeat, have ſuppoſed to intimate that the manifeſtations of the divine will, herein deſcribed, were given in form from the holy oracle, which the Jews diſtinguiſhed by the name of Deber; and ſome paſſages from the book might be produced in ſupport of this opinion [B]. However this may have been, it is certain that Moſes was the inſpired author of the book, and that he delivers in it nothing but what is conſiſtent with truth, and agreeable to

[A] Chap. xxvi. [B] Chap. vii. 89.

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the divine will, ſince it conſtitutes part of the Pentateuch, which in all ages has been univerſally aſcribed to Moſes, and it is cited as his inſpired work in various parts of ſcripture [c].

The book comprehends a period of about 38 years, reckoning from the firſt day of the ſecond month after the deliverance from Egypt, during which time the Iſraelites continued to wander in the wilderneſs [d]. Moſt of the tranſactions, however, deſcribed in this book, happened in the firſt and laſt of theſe years. The date of thoſe events which are recorded in the middle of the book cannot be preciſely aſcertained.

The hiſtory preſents us with an account of the conſecration of the Tabernacle, and of the offering of the princes at its dedication. It deſcribes the journies and encampments of Iſrael under the miraculous guidance of the cloud; the puniſhment at Taberah; and the ſignal vengeance with which, on ſeveral occaſions, God reſented the diſtruſtful murmurs of the people, and that rebellious ſpirit which ſo often broke out in ſedition againſt his appointed miniſters, particularly in the affair of Korah, which is deſcribed with great animation. The promptitude and ſeverity with which God enforced a reſpect for his laws, even to the exemplary condemnation

[c] Joſhua iv. 12. 2 Chron. xxix. 11. xxxi. 3. Ezek. xx. 13. xliv. 27. Matt. xii. 5. John vi. 31. ix. 36.

[d] The Iſraelites were condemned to wander ſo long in the wilderneſs for their ungrateful murmurs and diſtruſt in God. Vid. Numb. xiv. 23, 33. But by this ſegregation many important purpoſes were accompliſhed.

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of the man who prophaned the ſabbath, were neceſſary, when even a ſenſe of the immediate preſence of the Almighty, and a conſideration of the miracles daily performed, could not influence to obedience. Amidſt the terrors, however, of the divine judgments which the book unfolds, we perceive likewiſe the continuance of God's mercies in providing aſſiſtance for Moſes by the appointment of the ſeventy elders; in drawing water from the rock; and in the ſetting up of the brazen ſerpent. The benevolent zeal of Moſes to intercede on all occaſions for the people, even when puniſhed for ungrateful inſurrections againſt himſelf, deſerves likewiſe to be conſidered. The hiſtory is animated with much variety of event; and beſides the particulars above alluded to, it contains the account of the reſignation and death of Aaron; of the conqueſt of Sihon and Og; of the conduct of Balaam [E] towards Balak [F]; of the merited fate of Balaam; of the inſidious project to

[E] Balaam was probably a true prophet, who had been ſeduced by mercenary motives into idolatrous practices, having had recourſe to heathen enchantments, when he could not procure revelations from God. Vid. Numb. xxii. 8. xxiv. 1. 2 Pet. ii. 15. He reſided at Pethor, a city of Meſopotamia, towards the banks of the Euphrates. Pethor was afterwards called Bozor by the Syrians. Hence in 2 Pet. ii. 15. Βαλααμ του Βοσορ, "Balaam of the city of Boſor." Vid. Grotius in loc.

[F] God's anger appears to have been kindled againſt Balaam, as well for his general practice of divination, as for his deſire to procure "the wages of unrighteouſneſs," by curſing thoſe whom God had bleſſed. Maimonides abſurdly repreſents the ſpeaking of Balaam's aſs as a circumſtance executed only in

to ſeduce the Iſraelites; its ſucceſs and effects; and of the appointment of Joſhua. We perceive in every relation the conſiſtency of the divine intentions, and the propriety of the laws which God eſtabliſhed. When we contemplate, for inſtance, the arts and contrivance practiſed by idolatrous nations, we cannot wonder at the rigorous commands [c] delivered for the extirpation of the inhabitants of Canaan; or that the Almighty ſhould deſire to purge from pollution a land to be conſecrated to his ſervice. The book contains likewiſe a repetition of many principal laws given for the direction of the Iſraelites, with the addition of ſeveral precepts, civil and religious. It deſcribes ſome regulations eſtabliſhed for the ordering of the tribes, and for the diviſion of the land which the Iſraelites were about to poſſeſs. It furniſhes us alſo with a liſt of the tribes; and with that of Levi in particular, which is reſerved for a diſtinct roll, becauſe in poſſeſſion of an order in the prieſthood.

With reſpect to the numberings which are made in this book, it muſt be obſerved, that the tribes are not reckoned in the order in which their heads were

in viſion, though there is no ſhadow of reaſon why it ſhould not be conſidered as the account of a real event. Objections to miracles drawn from their difficulty are prepoſterous, when applied to an omnipotent Being; and that Moſes ſhould not ſtop to deſcribe the ſurprize of Balaam, was as conſiſtent with the gravity, as with the conciſeneſs, of his hiſtory. 2 Pet. ii. 15. and Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. iv. c. 3. Vid. Maim. More Nevoch. Part II. c. xliii.

[c] Deut. 1—6. xiii. 12—17. xx. 10—18.

born, but in that of their reſpective mothers, or according to their accidental or acquired precedence. 2d. That only thoſe males who were twenty years old and upwards are reckoned. And 3d. That Ephraim [H] and Manaſſeh are mentioned as two diſtinct tribes; but for the particular reaſons of every arrangement in the order and circumſtances of this enumeration, we muſt have recourſe to the commentators at large. From theſe an ample ſolution of the difficulties which occur in conſidering the particulars of the numberings may be obtained [I].

The moſt ſignal prophecies which are contained in this book, and bear teſtimony to its inſpiration, are thoſe bleſſings which Balaam [K] was conſtrained to utter concerning the future proſperity of the Iſraelites [L], and the deſtruction of their ſeveral enemies [M]; eſpecially in that diſtinct and extatic deſcription of the "Star which ſhould come out of Jacob, and of the Sceptre that ſhould riſe out

[H] In the number of the tribe of Ephraim compared with that of Manaſſeh, we perceive the accompliſhment of Jacob's propheey. Comp. Numb. i. 33—35. with Gen. xlviii. 19, 20. Comp. alſo for ſimilar illuſtration, Numb. i. 21. with Gen. xlix. 3, 4. and Numb. i. 27. with Gen. xlix. 8.

[I] Hieron. Com. Parker's Introd. to Numb. Lewis Antiq. Heb. L. VIII.

[K] Though God had probably rejected Balaam as an apoſtate prophet, he deigned to employ him on this ſignal occaſion as the herald of the divine oracles: to illuſtrate the impotency of the heathen arts, and to demonſtrate the power and foreknowledge of the divine Spirit.

[L] Ch. xxiii. 8—10, 23. xxiv. 8.

[M] Ch. xxiv.

of

of Iſrael [N]." The denunciation likewiſe againſt Moſes and Aaron for their diſbelief [O], as well as threats againſt the people for their murmurs [P], and the declaration, that none but Caleb and Joſhua ſhould enter the land, was ſtrikingly fulfilled; and it may be added, that the rites of the Paſſover, of which the obſervance is again enjoined in this book [Q], were figurative repreſentations of a predictive character.

[N] Ch. xxiv. 17, 19. The expreſſion of "the Star" might be choſen in alluſion to thoſe portentous lights which were ſuppoſed to precede the appearance of illuſtrious perſonages; and it is remarkable, that, as if in exact conformity with Balaam's prophecy, "a Star in the eaſt" indicated the time and place of our Saviour's nativity. Vid. Matt. Ch. ii.

[O] Ch. xx. 12. and Patrick in loc.

[P] Ch. xiv. 20—36.

[Q] Ch. ix. 12. comp. with John xix. 36.

OF THE

BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY.

THE fifth and laſt Book of the Pentateuch is diſtinguiſhed among the Jews by its initial word; though ſometimes the Rabbinical writers call it the Book of Reprehenſions; in alluſion to the frequent reproaches which it contains againſt the Iſraelites. It is alſo denominated Thora, which implies the Law; as well as Miſna, a copy of the Law; a word which correſponds with the title that the ſeventy have given it, Deuteronomy [A] ſignifying a repetition of the Law. It contains indeed a compendious repetition of the Law; enlarged with many explanatory additions, and enforced by the ſtrongeſt and moſt pathetic exhortations to obedience; as well for the more forcible impreſſion on the Iſraelites in general, as in particular for the benefit of thoſe who being born in the wilderneſs were not preſent at the firſt promulgation of the Law [B]. It is a kind of manual

[A] From Δευτερος νομος, a ſecond Law.

[B] Moſes in his addreſs to the Iſraelites obſerves, that "the Lord made not the covenant with their fathers, but with thoſe then alive;" for though many who were preſent at Sinai were now

manual of divine wiſdom; a commentary on the decalogue; and contains ſuch laws as concerned the people in general, as to their civil, military, and religious government, omitting for the moſt part what related to the Prieſts and Levites. It was delivered by Moſes, a little time previous to his death; to the people whom he had long governed and inſtructed; and bequeathed, with his other writings, to the charge of the Levites [c], as the moſt valuable teſtimony of his regard, in the fortieth year after the departure from Egypt, A. M. 2552.

THE book opens with an intereſting addreſs to the Iſraelites, in which Moſes briefly recapitulates the many circumſtances in which they had experienced the divine favour ſince their departure from Horeb. He deſcribes the ſucceſs and victories which had marked their progreſs; the incredulous murmurs and ingratitude, by which the people had incenſed God; and the effects of the divine wrath; eſpecially

now dead, many alſo muſt have been ſtill living; thoſe only having periſhed in conſequence of God's threats, who were twenty years old and upwards when they offended him by their murmurs; and even of thoſe condemned to die in the wilderneſs, many might, like Moſes, be ſuffered to behold the land which they were not to enter. Moſes, however, may perhaps mean only, that God made not that ſolemn covenant with their forefathers, the patriarchs, but with the generation of his contemporaries. Vid. Numb. xiv. 29. Deut. v. 3. and Calmet and Eſtius in loc.

[c] Chap. xxxi. 26. The two tables of the decalogue were placed in the ark; the reſt of the law in the ſide of the ark. Vid. 1 Kings viii. 9. Patrick in Deut. xxxi. 26.

in the inexorable decree by which he himſelf had been debarred from that land, for the poſſeſſion of which he had ſo earneſtly toiled. He proceeds with the moſt animated zeal to exhort them to future obedience; and to rehearſe in a diſcourſe, renewed at intervals, the various commandments, ſtatutes, and judgments, which had been delivered to them by God, that they might become "a wiſe and underſtanding nation;" and fulfil the terms of that covenant which the Lord had made with them in Horeb. Moſes, while he interſperſes with theſe laws frequent reproaches for their paſt miſconduct, unfolds the glorious attributes of God [D], and reiterates every perſuaſive motive to obedience. He commands them to diſtinguiſh their firſt entrance to Canaan, by a public diſplay of reverence for God's law: by erecting ſtones on which all its words and precepts might be inſcribed [E]. He enters into a new covenant with the people; which included not only that previouſly made at Horeb, but which renewed alſo and ratified thoſe aſſurances of ſpiritual bleſſings, long ſince imparted to Abraham and his deſcendants [F]. He then, in conſiſtency with the promiſes and ſanctions of both covenants, ſets forth for their election,

[D] Chap. xvii. 17, 18.

[E] Chap. xxvii. 1—5. Moſes expreſsly commands, that "all the words of the law" ſhould be written, which cannot mean, as ſome have ſuppoſed, merely the decalogue.

[F] Chap. xxix. 12, 13. Biſhop Bull was of opinion, that only the Abrahamic covenant was here renewed; but it ſhould rather ſeem, that both this and the covenant of Sinai were renewed and ratified. Vid. Bull's Diſſ. Poſt. c. xi.

"life

"life and good, and death and evil:" temporal and eternal recompence, or preſent and future puniſhment [G].

In the preceding books of the Pentateuch, Moſes ſpeaks of himſelf in the third perſon, but here in a more animated manner, he drops as it were the character of an hiſtorian, and is introduced as immediately addreſſing himſelf to his countrymen [H]. Hence it is that in deſcribing what he uttered, he repeats the decalogue with ſome ſlight change of expreſſion from that which was uſed at its firſt delivery; a variation which, as it affected not the import of the commandment, might have ſerved to indicate, that not the letter, but the ſpirit of the law ſhould be regarded: he likewiſe introduces ſome general alterations in the code that he preſents, which ſhould be conſidered as ſupplementary additions requiſite by a change of time and circumſtances; and he takes occaſion to intimate that ſpiritual intention of the law, by which it was deſigned for the inward government of man [I]. It ſhould here be remarked, that the ſevere ſpirit which pervades the law, as ſhewn in the numerous exactions and declaratory curſes [K] detailed in this book, was conſiſtently contrived to

[G] Maimonides, conſcious that the Moſaic promiſes of temporal reward were figurative of future recompence, gives this traditionary explanation of the ſanction in Deut. iv. 40. *Ut bene ſit tibi* "in ſæculo quod totum eſt bonum." *Et prolonges dies*, "in ſæculum quod totum eſt longum."

[H] Chap. i. 6. ii. 17. iv. 8. ix. 13. x. 3.

[I] Chap. x. 16.

[K] Chap. xxvii.

point out the rigorous character of the divine juſtice, which, in a covenant of ſtipulated obſervances, neceſſarily required punctilious and univerſal obedience [L]. For though the divine mercy might compaſſionate the weakneſs of human nature, and therefore it preſcribed atonements not difficult to be paid; yet God could not, in conformity with his relation to the Iſraelites, overlook even involuntary deficiencies or carnal defilement. A ſimilar ſpirit of ſtern equity appeared as to the civil regulations of ſociety: and the law not only ſuffered, but required an exact retaliation: "Life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth [M]." A requiſition which, while it ſtrongly enforced God's abhorrence of injuries could not be abuſed under a government, which provided cities of refuge for undeſigning offenders, and adminiſtered its judgments upon principles univerſally known and accepted.

THE book contains a period of nearly two months: an hiſtory of the concluſion of the Life of Moſes,

[L] Deut. xxvii. 26. The law rigorouſly enforced the obſervance of whatever it enjoined, though ſome precepts were framed with ſomewhat of lax and indulgent conſideration of what the perverſe temper of the Iſraelites would bear; thus as they had been long accuſtomed to divorces, it was judged right, rather to reſtrict them by deliberate regulations, than entirely to aboliſh them, which might have occaſioned bad conſequences. Vid. Deut. xxiv. 1—4. Matt. v. 31. xix. 7. Selden Uxor. Heb. Lib. iii. ch. 24. The laws with reſpect to paternal authority were rather regulations to reſtrict the unbounded power which parents, among other nations, did poſſeſs over their children, than to inveſt them with new rights.

[M] Vid. Chap. xix. 21.

whoſe

whoſe laſt days were diſtinguiſhed by encreaſing ſolicitude, and by the moſt active exertions for the welfare of his people After a commemorative hymn [N], in which he pathetically exhorts them " to conſider their latter end;" and after having uttered his prophetic bleſſings in ſolemn and appropriate promiſes to the ſeveral tribes, this great man is repreſented to have retired, by divine command, to the top of Mount Nebo; from whence he had a proſpect of Canaan, and foreſaw the ſpeedy accompliſhment of God's promiſes. He then, in the full poſſeſſion of his powers and faculties, " when his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated," died in the 120th year of his age.

The mention of Dan [O] in the firſt verſe of the laſt chapter of this book, as well as the account of the death and burial of Moſes, and ſome other ſeem-

[N] The fine atteſtation to the praiſe of God, which is contained in the 4th verſe of this hymn, is prefixed as a beginning to the prayer, which the Jews repeat at the burial of their dead, and which they call Tzidduck hadin, that is, " juſt judgment." Vid. Patrick in Deut. xxxii. 4.

[O] It has been ſaid, that ſome names uſed in the Pentateuch were not applied to the places which they deſcribe, till after the death of Moſes; if the truth of this remark could be proved, we might ſuppoſe the modern names to have been ſubſtituted by Ezra, or by ſome prophet, poſterior to Moſes, for the information of later times; but the aſſertion often proceeds from miſtake, and from a want of diſtinction; for inſtance, the Dan ſpoken of by Moſes, might be different from the place afterwards ſo named in Judges xviii. 29. Joſephus conceives it to have been a river, one of the ſources of the Jordan. Vid. Antiq. Lib. iii. ch. 11.

ingly

ingly poſthumous particulars therein deſcribed [P], have been produced to prove, that this chapter could not be written by Moſes; and in all probability theſe circumſtances might have been inſerted by Joſhua, to complete the hiſtory of this illuſtrious prophet; or were afterwards added by Samuel, or ſome prophet who ſucceeded him. They were admitted by Ezra as authentic, and we have no reaſon to queſtion the fidelity of the account.

THE book is cited as the Book of Moſes in many parts of ſcripture [Q]; and numberleſs paſſages are produced from it in teſtimony, by Chriſt and his Apoſtles [R].

WITH reſpect to the prophetic part of Deuteronomy, it ſhould be remarked, that the Meſſiah is here more explicitly foretold than in the preceding books, and deſcribed as the completion of the Jewiſh œconomy. "I will raiſe them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he ſhall ſpeak unto them all that I ſhall command him [S]." The pro-

[P] There has been an abſurb cavil on chap. i. 1. of this book, where Moſes is ſaid to have written it "on this ſide Jordan." The word Beeber applies to either ſide in relation to the ſpeaker. Vid. 1 Sam. xiv. 20. Huet. Demon. Evang. Prop. c. iv. Witſius Miſcel. Sac. Lib. i. c. 14. Philo de Vit. Moſ. Lib. iii. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. iv. c. 6. Vid. alſo Patrick in Deut. iii. 11.

[Q] Joſh. i. 5, 7. 1 Kings ii. 3. 2 Chron. xxv. 4. Dan. ix. 13, &c.

[R] Matt. iv. 4. xv. 4. John i. 45. Acts iii. 22. Gal. iii. 13.

[S] Deut. xviii. 18. comp. with John i. 45. and Acts vii. 37.

phecies

phecies of Moſes encreaſe in number and clearneſs towards the cloſe of his writings. As he approached the end of his life, he appears to have diſcerned futurity with more exactneſs. His denunciations concerning the future rewards and puniſhments, the ſucceſs, diſperſions, and deſolations of his people [T]; his prophetic bleſſings on the tribes [V], his deſcription of the rapid victories of the Romans [U]; of the miſeries to be ſuſtained by his beſieged countrymen [X]; and particularly his prophecies relative to their preſent condition, as accompliſhed under our own obſervation [Y], bear a ſtriking evidence to the truth and inſpiration of his writings, and fearfully illuſtrate the character of the divine attributes.

THE Book of Deuteronomy brings down the ſacred Hiſtory to A. M. 2552, and completes the volume of the Pentateuch, of which every part is uniformly and conſiſtently perfect.

[T] Chap. iv. 25—30. xi. 23—29. xxviii. xxx. xxxi. 2, 3—8. xxxii. and xxxiii.

[V] Chap. xxxiii.

[U] Chap. xxviii. 49—52. The Romans are pourtrayed under the deſcription of an eagle, in alluſion to the image with which their ſtandard was decorated. It is remarkable alſo, that the enemy was to come "from the end of the earth;" and Veſpaſian, in fact, came from Britain againſt Jeruſalem.

[X] Chap. xxviii. 52—58. comp. with Joſeph. de Bell. Jud.

[Y] Chap. xxviii. in which a chain of illuſtrious prophecies is delivered in one complicated denunciation, and various calamities are blended into one point of view. Vid. Newton on the Prophecies, 7th Diſſer.

GENERAL

GENERAL PREFACE

TO THE

HISTORICAL BOOKS.

THE Hiſtorical Books of Scripture were written by perſons who compoſed them under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Some of them are entitled with the names of diſtinguiſhed prophets; and the reſt are univerſally attributed to writers inveſted with the ſame character. The Hebrew annals were kept only by privileged and appointed perſons [A], and the writers, who are occaſionally mentioned in ſcripture as the penmen of the ſacred hiſtory, are expreſsly denominated Prophets or Seers [B]. It is evident, likewiſe, that the authors of the hiſtorical as well as of the prophetical books muſt have been inſpired, ſince they every where diſplayed an acquaintance with the counſels and deſigns of God;

[A] Vid. Joſeph. cont. Apion, Lib. I.

[B] 1 Sam. xxii. 5. 1 Kings xvi. 1, 7. 1 Chron. xxix. 29. 2 Chron. xii. 15. xx. 34. xxvi. 22. xxxii. 32. Jerem. xxviii. 7.

developed

developed the ſecret ſprings and concealed wiſdom of his government; and often revealed his future mercies and judgments in the cleareſt predictions. They uniformly adhere to the moſt excellent inſtruction; illuſtrate the perfection of God's attributes, and exemplify the tendency of his precepts. They invariably maintain a ſtrict ſincerity of intention; and in their deſcription of character and event they exhibit an unexampled impartiality. Their writings were received as ſacred into the Hebrew canon, and in Ezra's collection they were arranged under the claſs of Prophetical Books. The Books of Joſhua, of Judges, (including Ruth,) of Samuel, and of Kings, were called the Books of the former prophets [c]; and conſidered as the production not only of enlightened men of unimpeached veracity, exalted character, and diſintereſted views; but of perſons who were occaſionally favoured with divine revelations; who unqueſtionably wrote under a divine influence; and were employed to regiſter the judgments and deſigns of God; and as ſuch, indeed, they are cited by the evangelical writers.

It is clear from all theſe conſiderations, that the ſacred hiſtorians wrote under the influence of the Holy Ghoſt; which though it did not diſcloſe to them by immediate revelation thoſe things that might be collected from the common ſources of intelligence, undoubtedly directed them in the ſelection of their materials; and enlightened them to judge of the

[c] Thoſe of Iſaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor Prophets, being ſtyled the Books of the later Prophets.

truth and importance of thoſe accounts, from which they borrowed their information. The hiſtorical books appear, indeed, to have been generally written by authors contemporary with thoſe periods to which they ſeverally relate; and hence do they often deſcribe ſuch particulars as the prophets themſelves had witneſſed and beheld; and contain ſuch minute and accurate deſcriptions, as none but authors coeval with the events could have furniſhed. Some of them, however, were compiled in ſubſequent times; and then they may be ſuppoſed to have been in part collected from thoſe authentic documents that were known and eſteemed by their countrymen; and to have been enlarged with ſuch additional particulars, as muſt have been derived from divine communications imparted to themſelves, or others. Theſe books are to be conſidered, indeed, as the hiſtories of revelations: as commentaries on the prophecies, and as affording a lively ſketch of the œconomy of God's government of his ſelected people. They were not deſigned as national annals, to record every minute particular and political event that occurred; but they are rather a compendious ſelection of ſuch remarkable occurrences as were beſt calculated to illuſtrate the religion of the Hebrew nation; to ſet before that perverſe and ungrateful people an abſtract of God's proceedings, and of their intereſts and duties; as alſo to furniſh poſterity with an inſtructive picture of the divine attributes, and with a model of that diſpenſation on which a nobler and more ſpiritual government was to be erected. It is, indeed,

evident, that ſome more diffuſe and circumſtantial records [D] were ſometimes kept by the prieſts, or other publickly-appointed perſons [E]; for to ſuch records the ſacred writers occaſionally allude, as bearing teſtimony to their accounts; or refer to them for a more minute detail of thoſe particulars which they omit as inconſiſtent with their deſigns. Theſe, however, not being compoſed by inſpired writers, were not admitted into the ſacred canon; and though Joſephus informs us, that the prieſts were accuſtomed after every war carefully to correct and to reform their regiſters [F]: and the author of the ſecond Book of Maccabees mentions, that Judas Maccabeus gathered together ſuch writings as had been diſperſed [G]; yet after the abolition of the Jewiſh prieſthood, and the many calamities, perſecutions, and diſperſions which this whole nation hath ſuffered, we need not wonder that theſe voluminous writings have periſhed; and indeed it required the eſpecial protection of providence, as well as that reverential fondneſs which the Jews entertained for the

[D] As alſo genealogies, chronicles of the prieſthood, &c.

[E] Cont. Apion, Lib. I. Joſephus ſpeaks of genealogical regiſters as diſtinct from the twenty-two canonical books; and obſerves, that they contained the names of the Hebrew prieſts for a ſucceſſion of 2000 years. He ſpeaks alſo of hiſtories written by others, reſpectable for their conſiſtency.

[F] The keepers of theſe genealogies are ſometimes called Maſchirim, Recorders or Memorialiſts. 2 Sam. viii. 16. 2 Kings xviii. 18. 1 Chron. xviii. 15. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8. 1 Macc. xxiii. 24.

[G] 2 Macc. ii. 14.

ſacred

ſacred books, to preſerve their canon from deſtruction or injury. We have, however, the leſs reaſon to regret the loſs of the other Jewiſh writings, ſince the ſcriptures furniſh us with the ſcheme of prophecy, and with the account of that peculiar œconomy by which the Jews were diſtinguiſhed from all other nations.

THE hiſtorical books of ſcripture, if conſidered diſtinctly from the Pentateuch, and the writings more particularly ſtiled prophetical, contain a compendium of the Jewiſh hiſtory from the death of Moſes, A. M. 2552, to the reformation eſtabliſhed by Nehemiah after the return from the captivity, A. M. 3595. After the death of Moſes, Joſhua continued to record thoſe miraculous particulars which demonſtrated the divine interpoſition in favour of the Iſraelites, and to commemorate the events that preceded and accompliſhed their ſettlement in the land of Canaan. The eventful period which ſucceeded the death of Joſhua, during which the Hebrews were ſubjected to the government of the Judges, as miniſters of the theocracy, furniſhed a large ſcope for the induſtry of the ſacred hiſtorians; and Samuel, or ſome other prophet, appears to have ſelected ſuch particulars as were beſt calculated to deſcribe the period; and to have digeſted them into the Book of Judges; having doubtleſs procured much information from the records of the Prieſts or Judges, ſome of whom were inſpired, though prophetic revelations were "ſcarce in thoſe days [H];" and divine communications were

[H] 1 Sam. iii. 1.

made

made by means of the Urim and Thummim [1]. From the time of Samuel, the Jews ſeem to have been favoured with a regular ſucceſſion of prophets, who, in an uninterrupted ſeries, bequeathed to each other, with the mantle of prophecy, the charge of commemorating ſuch important particulars as were conſiſtent with the plan of ſacred hiſtory; and who, ſuperior to the oſtentation of prefixing their names to their ſeveral contributions, took up the hiſtory where the preceding prophet ceaſed, without diſtinguiſhing their reſpective contributions. It is poſſible, however, that the books of Kings and of Chronicles

[1] Exod. xxviii. 30. Levit. viii. 8. Numb. xxvii. 21. The Urim and Thummim, which words ſignify light and perfection, are applied to a miraculous ornament worn on the breaſt-plate of the high-prieſt, and ſuppoſed by ſome to be deſcriptive of the twelve jewels in the breaſt-plate, which were engraven with the names of the tribes of Iſrael; but which perhaps meant ſomething diſtinct from theſe. Compare Exod. xxxix. 10. with Levit. viii. 8. Some imagine that they were oracular figures that gave articulate anſwers; others, that they implied only a plate of gold, engraven with the Tetragrammaton, or ſacred name of Jehovah. Whatever the ornament was, it enabled the high-prieſt to collect divine inſtruction upon occaſions of national importance. Some conceive that the intelligence was furniſhed by an extraordinary protruſion or ſplendor of the different letters. But others, with more reaſon, think that the Urim and Thummim only qualified the prieſt to preſent himſelf in the holy place, to receive anſwers from the mercy-ſeat in the tabernacle; and in the camp from ſome other conſecrated place whence the divine voice might iſſue. Vid. Prid. Con. Par. I. Book III. Jennings's Jewiſh Antiq. Lib. III. c. ix. Philo Jud. de Monarch. Lib. II. Spencer's Urim and Thummim.

do not contain a complete compilation of the entire works of each contemporary prophet; but rather an abridgment of their ſeveral labours, digeſted by Ezra, in or after the captivity, with intention to exhibit the ſacred hiſtory at one point of view: and hence it is that they contain ſome expreſſions which evidently reſult from contemporary deſcription; and others, that as clearly argue them to have been compoſed long after the occurrences which they relate. Hence alſo it is, that though particular periods are more diffuſely treated of than others, we ſtill find throughout a connected ſeries of events, and in each individual book a general uniformity of ſtile.

The object of the ſacred hiſtorians was to communicate inſtruction to mankind, and to illuſtrate the nature of God's providence in ſmall, as well as in great occurrences, in particular inſtances, as well as in general appointments; they therefore often deſcend from the great out-line of national concerns to the minute detail of private hiſtory. The relations, however, of individual events, that are occaſionally interſperſed, are highly intereſting; and admirably develope the deſigns of the Almighty, and the character of thoſe times to which they are reſpectively aſſigned. Thoſe ſeeming digreſſions, likewiſe, in which the inſpired writers have recorded ſuch remarkable events as related to particular perſonages, or ſuch occurences in foreign countries, as tended to affect the intereſts of the Hebrew nation, are not only valuable for the religious ſpirit which they breathe, but are to be admired as ſtrictly conſiſtent with

with the ſacred plan. Thus the hiſtories of Job, of Ruth, and of Eſther, though apparently extrinſic appendages, are in reality connected parts of one entire fabrick; and exhibit, in minute delineation, that wiſdom which is elſewhere diſplayed on a larger ſcale; as they likewiſe preſent an engaging picture of that private virtue, which in an extended influence operated to national proſperity. Theſe books conſtitute, then, an important part of the ſacred volume; which furniſhes a complete code of inſtructive leſſons, conveyed under every form, diverſified with every ſtile of compoſition, and enlivened with every illuſtration of circumſtance.

While the twelve tribes were united under one government, their hiſtory is repreſented under one point of view. When a ſeparation took place, the kingdom of Judah, from which tribe the Meſſiah was to deſcend, was the chief object of attention with the ſacred hiſtorians; they however occaſionally treat of the events that occurred in Samaria, eſpecially when connected with the concerns of Judah: they draw inſtructive accounts of the government of Iſrael, from the ſeparation of the ten tribes to their captivity; and place the circumſtances which produced it in ſtriking colours before the inhabitants of Judah, whoſe unrighteouſneſs was afterwards puniſhed by a ſimilar fate. Some account of the circumſtances which occurred in Samaria, was kept probably by thoſe prophets, who were born, or laboured among the people of that country [K]; and the

[K] 1 Kings xix. 18. xi. 29. xiv. 2. xvi. 7. 2 Chron. xxviii. 9.

ſame prophets furniſhed materials for the ſacred authors of the hiſtorical books, who were prophets of Judah.

THE prophets who were mercifully raiſed up to conſole the Hebrew nation during the Babyloniſh captivity, have ſcattered among their predictions ſome few lines of contemporary hiſtory; but they have furniſhed no particular account of the circumſtances that diſtinguiſhed the condition of their countrymen; who, however, muſt have received every poſſible mitigation of the ſeverity of their affliction, from the good offices of ſuch among them as conciliated the favour of the Babyloniſh ſovereigns; and from the prophetic aſſurances which opened to them the proſpect of a return to their country.

As the ſucceſſion of the prophets ceaſed in Malachi, the volume of the ſacred hiſtory was cloſed with the account of the reſtoration of the Jews, and of their exertions to rebuild their cities, and to re-eſtabliſh the order and ſecurity of their government. The laſt deſcription repreſents them ſettled and reformed by the pious zeal of Nehemiah, and animated to the expectation of that "greater glory," which ſhould ſhine in their latter temple, when "the deſire of all nations ſhould come [L]."

IN poſſeſſion of the complete volume of the ſcriptures, the Jews required no farther revelations of the divine will to explain and inculcate the terms of their acceptance. Enabled by the ſacred records

[L] Haggai ii. 7, 9.

to

to look back on the viciſſitudes which their nation had experienced, and to contemplate the character of God's judgments in the inſtructive ſcenes, they needed no longer any living prophet to warn them of that wrath which ſin and idolatry would provoke [M], or to aſſure them of that recompenſe which obedience would obtain. The deſign and character alſo of the old covenant, its ſpiritual import, and its figurative contexture, were now unravelled for the inſtruction of mankind, and no fit ſubject remained for the employment of the inſpired penmen, till the appearance of a new diſpenſation. Of the period, therefore, that intervened between the death of Malachi, and the arrival of that meſſenger whom he foretold, no authentic account can be obtained [N]. An awful interval of expectation prevailed before the coming of him who was to appear alone, on which but little light is thrown by the occaſional accounts of apocryphal and prophane hiſtorians. The nation, however, appears to have been ſucceſſively ſubjected to the Perſian, Egyptian, and Syrian monarchies, till reſcued into liberty by the valour of the Maccabees, in whom the ſucceſſors of David were re-eſtabliſhed on the throne. Theſe continued to flouriſh, with diminiſhed ſplendor, and in ſubſerviency to the Roman power, till the days of Herod, under whom Chriſt was born, and "the ſceptre departed from Judah [O]."

In

[M] Luke xvi. 29, 31.

[N] Euſebius attempts not to go beyond Zerubbabel.

[O] Gen. xlix. 10. The ſceptre departed from Judah when Herod, who was an Idumæan proſelyte, aſcended the throne.

In a retroſpect of the ſacred hiſtory, it is obvious to remark, that one deſign of the inſpired writers was, to place before us the melancholy proofs of that corruption which had been entailed on mankind; and to exhibit in the depravity of a nation highly favoured, miraculouſly governed, and inſtructed by inſpired teachers, the neceſſity of that redemption and renewal of righteouſneſs, which was ſo early and ſo repeatedly promiſed by the prophets. The univerſal iniquity overwhelmed by the flood [P]; the incorrigible perverſeneſs of the Hebrew nation; the lapſe of the moſt upright perſons; and the hardened and obdurate wickedneſs of confirmed ſinners, are induſtriouſly diſplayed with this view; and in a long ſucceſſion of dark ſcenes, no perfect character can be found; and but few, comparatively, whoſe vir-

The deſcendants of Zerobabel, as alſo the Aſmonæans, who till this time had poſſeſſed the government (ſometimes, indeed, in reſtricted ſubjection to foreign powers) were of the tribe of Judah, though the Aſmonæans were by the female line. In conſequence of this predicted change of government, the expectation of "the Shiloh" was ſo general, that it gave riſe to a ſect called Herodians, who flattered Herod as being the Meſſiah; as well as to the notion afterwards maintained by ſome, that Agrippa, the grandſon of Herod by Mariamne (the grand-daughter of Hyrcanus, the Aſmonæan prieſt) was entitled to that diſtinction; not to mention the numberleſs falſe prophets who called themſelves "the Chriſt." Vid. Cyril. Alex. cont. Julian. Hieron. in Sophon. cap. i. Epiph. Hæris. 20. Tertul. de Præſcr. Schol. in Perſii Satyr. 5. l. 180. Baron Apparat. ad Annal. Eccleſ. P. I. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XII. c. 8. 1 Chron. iii. Matt. i. Luke iii.

[P] Gen. vi. 5.

tues

tues could be propoſed for imitation to mankind. The ſacred writers deſcribed characters and paſſions as they beheld them, without flattery or diſguiſe, often without comment or remark; leaving them to excite thoſe ſentiments of eſteem or repugnance which they were ſeverally calculated to awaken. In ſome righteous characters, however, they tranſcribe and exemplify the purity of God's laws; and thoſe precepts which they interweave in their relations, are always excellent. In the judgments of God they likewiſe pourtray his attributes; repreſent him as watching over innocence; as indulgently ſuſpending wrath; but as finally avenging himſelf on unrepented ſins. They ſelect from the events of their hiſtory thoſe circumſtances which are beſt calculated to furniſh inſtruction, and therefore often paſs with rapidity over great national events, and dilate with minuteneſs on whatever may ſerve to ſhew the nature of the divine government, or to illuſtrate the intereſts and duties of mankind. If they ſometimes admit particulars, of which the deſign in theſe reſpects is not obvious, it muſt be recollected, that ſuch particulars might have had an importance among the Jews, though we are no longer ſenſible of their utility.

THE chronological and genealogical accounts, which now ſerve chiefly to prove the information and accuracy of the ſacred hiſtorians, formerly aſſiſted to keep up neceſſary diſtinctions, and to aſcertain the exact accompliſhment of prophecy. If, with regard to theſe, or any other minute particulars, the

ſacred books now ſeem to contain any inconſiſtencies or errors, theſe muſt be attributed to the negligence of copyiſts, and to the inſenſible corruptions which muſt ariſe from frequent tranſcription, eſpecially in ſuch points. The errors, however, which induſtrious objection affects to diſcover, are often imaginary; and it is not probable, even if we ſuppoſe the authors of theſe books to have been merely human, unaſſiſted writers, that they ſhould be ſo little converſant with the hiſtory of their country, as to be guilty of the contradictions which modern commentators have pretended to point out; and which, if they had exiſted, muſt, as more glaring to their contemporaries whom theſe writers addreſſed, have neceſſarily diminiſhed their credit. The truth is, that if we are ſometimes perplexed with difficulties, it is in conſequence of the want of contemporary accounts, and an effect of that obſcurity which muſt be ſuppoſed to overſhadow periods ſo long elapſed; and the genealogical and chronological differences which are ſaid ſometimes to prevail, have ariſen not only from the corruptions to which numbers are particularly ſubject, but from the different ſcope which the writers took.

In the detail of lineage, the ſacred writers often inſerted only illuſtrious perſons, and ſometimes added collateral kindred [q]. They ſometimes altered names, where variety admitted preference, as was

[q] Le Clerc Sentimens de quelques Theol. Theod. Præf. in Quæſt. Lib. Reg. R. David Kimchi. Michael, &c.

cuſtomary

cuſtomary among eaſtern nations; and in chronological accounts they calculated frequently in round numbers, where accuracy was of no conſequence [R]. They likewiſe aſſumed various æras. Thus in Geneſis, Moſes reckoned only by the ages of the patriarchs. In Exodus he, as ſucceeding prophets, dated from the departure out of Egypt; and others, who lived in later times, from the building of the temple [S]; from the commencement of the reigns of their ſeveral kings [T]; from their captivities and deliverances [U], and other important national events [X]; or, laſtly, from the reigns of foreign kings [Y]; whom if they deſcribed by names different from thoſe under which they are mentioned in prophane hiſtory, it was in accommodation to the titles by which they were known to the Jews. The difficulties which occur on a ſuperficial peruſal of the ſcriptures chiefly originate in want of attention to theſe conſiderations; and they who have not the leiſure and induſtry which are neceſſary to elucidate ſuch particulars, will do well to collect the obvious inſtruction which is richly ſpread through every page of the ſacred volume, rather than to embark in ſpeculations of delicate diſcuſſion, or to entangle themſelves in objections which reſult from ignorance.

[R] Gen. xv. 13. 1 Kings vi. 1. Uſſer Chron. Sac. c. 12.
[S] 2 Chron. viii. 1.
[T] As the earlier prophets.
[U] Ezek. i. 2.
[X] Amos i. 1.
[Y] Ezek. xi. 1. Dan. x. 1. Zechar. i. 1. Haggai i. 1.

The

The hiſtorical, like all other parts of ſcripture, have every mark of genuine and unaffected truth. Many relations are interwoven with accounts of other nations, yet no inconſiſtencies have been detected. A connected and dependent chain of hiſtory, an uniform and pervading ſpirit of piety, a co-operating deſign, invariably prevails in every page of the ſacred books, and the hiſtorical unfold the accompliſhment of the prophetic parts.

OF THE

BOOK OF JOSHUA.

IT has been contended by ſome writers, that the Book which paſſes under the name of Joſhua in all the copies, was not written by him; but that this title was choſen rather as deſcriptive of the chief perſonage of the book, than with deſign to intimate its author; in the ſame manner as the books of Eſther, of Job, or of Ruth, are ſo called, becauſe they treat principally concerning the actions of thoſe perſons whoſe names they reſpectively bear. But if we wave all arguments that might be drawn from the title, there will ſtill remain ſufficient grounds to conclude, that the book, or at leaſt the greater part of it, was written by Joſhua himſelf, agreeably to the general opinion. It is, indeed, expreſsly ſaid, towards the concluſion of the book, that Joſhua wrote theſe words in the book of the law of God [A], which ſeems to imply, that he ſubjoined this hiſtory to the Pentateuch.

[A] Chap. xxiv. 26. See alſo 1 Kings xvi. 34. comp. with Joſhua vi. 26.

JOSHUA

JOSHUA is repreſented through the whole work as appointed by God to govern and inſtruct his people. He is likewiſe deſcribed in the book of Eccleſiaſticus [B], under the title of "Jeſus the ſon of Nave," as "the ſucceſſor of Moſes in prophecies;" there is therefore ample reaſon to be convinced, that Joſhua was the author of the book, except, perhaps, of a few verſes towards the concluſion: the account of his death being added by one of his ſucceſſors, in like manner as he might have ſupplied what was neceſſary to complete the hiſtory of Moſes. The ancient Talmudiſts, and the voice of general tradition, attribute the book to Joſhua; and it is expreſsly ſaid in Bava Bathra, that Joſhua wrote the book diſtinguiſhed by his name [C]; and the eight laſt verſes of the law. It is alſo added, in the ſame place, that Eleazar wrote the twenty-ninth verſe of the twenty-fourth chapter of Joſhua, as Phineas did the thirty-third; and probably all the five laſt verſes were added by Eleazar the high-prieſt, his ſon Phineas, or Samuel.

THE principal objections made againſt the aſſignment of this book to Joſhua are, firſt, that in the thirteenth verſe of the tenth chapter, the circumſtance of the ſun and moon being ſtayed, is ſaid to be written in the book of Jaſhir; by which it is meant to inſinuate, that the book of Joſhua is only a compendious hiſtory, ſelected from larger chronicles, in

[B] Eccluſ xlvi. 1.

[C] Bava Bathra, cap. i. Spanhem. Hiſt. Eccl. V. T. Tom. 1. P. 339.

later

later times. Now to whatever book this reference may be ſuppoſed to apply, whether to a previous narrative, or to a ſong compoſed on the occaſion of the great event here ſpoken of, it does not follow that Joſhua could not be the author of a work in which the book of Jaſhir is quoted; as probably containing a more minute and circumſtantial account of this remarkable miracle [D]. Secondly, thoſe expreſſions which have been brought to prove that the hiſtory was written long after the events therein recorded, as that the ſtones which Joſhua ſet up, "are there unto this day [E]," with ſimilar paſſages, which argue that the relation was ſometime ſubſequent to the occurrences deſcribed, do in reality only ſerve to ſhew, what other circumſtances confirm, that Joſhua wrote the book towards the concluſion of his days; and then, as ſpeaking of the earlier periods of his government, he might conſiſtently uſe theſe and ſimilar expreſſions [F].

It has been aſſerted, farther, that ſome things are

[D] Joſhua deſcribes this miracle according to the received notions of aſtronomy. Vid. Calmet Diſſert. ſur le Commandement, &c.

[E] Chap. iv. 9. v. 9. Vid. alſo chap. x. 27. Matth. xxvii. 8.

[F] The book muſt have been written by a perſon at leaſt nearly contemporary with Joſhua, ſince Rahab was living in the author's time. Vid. chap. vi. 25. and v. 1. where the author ſpeaks of himſelf as preſent at the paſſage over Jordan. Obſerve alſo chap. viii. 28. xv. 63. xvi. 10. and the circumſtantial detail of particulars which argues a contemporary writer.

related

related in this book which did not happen till after the death of Joſhua; as the expedition of the Danites againſt Leſhem [G]; which apparently is related as a ſubſequent event in the book of Judges. Hence ſome have attributed the book to Eleazar; ſome to Samuel; and ſome to Iſaiah, or Ezra, and others; but it is not neceſſary on this account to deprive Joſhua of his title to the book; for if the relation in Judges be not the hiſtory of a different expedition [H], we may ſuppoſe the account in this book to be an interpolation made by Ezra, or ſome prophet poſterior to Joſhua; and this is the more probable ſolution of the difficulty, ſince the verſe which records the conqueſt of the Danites, appears evidently to be an intrinſic addition, afterwards inſerted to complete the account of the Danite's poſſeſſions. It may be remarked farther, that whatever is ſaid of Othniel and Achſah, in the book of Judges, is only a recapitulation of what happened under Joſhua [I]. The land of Cabul mentioned in Joſhua [K], is by Joſephus diſtinguiſhed from

that

[G] Chap. xix. 47.

[H] Judges xviii. 27—29. It is poſſible that the Laiſh mentioned in Judges was a different place from the Leſhem ſpoken of in Joſhua. The accounts, indeed, vary in ſome circumſtances. In Joſhua, Leſhem itſelf is ſaid to have been called Dan. In Judges, Laiſh is repreſented to have been burnt, and the city which was built in its room was called Dan.

[I] Chap. xv. 13, 19. and Judges i. 11—15. or the paſſage might be a ſubſequent inſertion into the book of Joſhua.

[K] Chap. xix. 27. and 1 Kings ix. 13. The former a city on the borders of Ptolemais, the latter a diſtrict containing ſeveral towns. Vid. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. VIII. c. ii. Huet. Demon.

that which is ſpoken of in the book of Kings; and "the houſe of God" in this book, does not imply the temple; which was not built till long after the death of Joſhua; but means the Tabernacle and Ark, which did exiſt in his time. Theſe difficulties being thus removed, we may conclude that Joſhua was the author of the book that bears his name. It contains an account of the diſtribution of property, which muſt ſoon have been committed to writing. It was admitted by Ezra into the canon as inſpired, and it is cited as ſcripture by many of the ſacred writers [L], and eſpecially as the work of Joſhua in Kings, where his words are ſaid to be the words of God [M].

JOSHUA who was the ſon of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim, was firſt called Oſea, or Hoſea [N], a name, which, as it ſignifies Saviour, was well adapt-

Demon. Evan. Prop. iv. The idea that places are in this book ſometimes diſtinguiſhed by names not adopted till later times, is, perhaps, often fanciful, ſince the origin and date of names are extremely uncertain; but where modern names are found, they might have been affixed by thoſe who read, copied, or reviſed the book.

[L] 1 Chron. ii. 7. xii. 15. Pſa. cxix. 3. Iſa. xxviii. 21. Acts vii. 45. Heb. xi. 31. xiii. 5. James ii. 25, 28. Eccluſ xlvi. 4. 1 Mac. ii. 5, 6.

[M] 1 Kings xvi. 34.

[N] הושע, Hoſea ſalvator יהושע, Joſhua dominus ſalvator. The former denotes an hope, the latter an aſſurance of ſalvation. Moſes appears to have made this ſlight change in the name of Joſhua, in order to commemorate his appointment "to ſpy out the land" into which he was afterwards to conduct the people. Vid. Num. xiii. 16, 17. Auguſt. cont. Fauſt. Tom. VI. Lib. XVI. c. 19.

ed

ed to his character as typical of our ſpiritual Saviour. He is alſo by St. Luke, and by the author of Eccleſiaſticus, ſtiled Jeſus; a juſt repreſentative of that Jeſus who leads us into a Canaan of endleſs felicity, through the water of baptiſm [o]. Joſhua was "filled with the ſpirit of wiſdom," and took upon him the government of Iſrael by command of God [p]; agreeably to the prediction of Moſes, who had promiſed that "the Lord ſhould raiſe up a prophet like unto him, as his ſucceſſor [q]." The piety, courage, and diſinterested integrity of Joſhua are conſpicuouſly diſplayed through the whole courſe of his conduct. Independently of the inſpiration which enlightened his mind and writings, he derived divine information, ſometimes by immediate revelation from God [r]; and ſometimes from the ſanctuary, and by the mouth of Eleazar the high-prieſt, the ſon of Aaron, who having on the breaſt-plate, and preſenting himſelf before the veil over againſt the mercy-

[o] Acts xvii. 45. Ecclus xlvi. 1. Heb. iv. 8. Grot. Com. in Matt. i. 21.

[p] Numb. xxvii. 18—20. Deut. xxxi. 7, 14. xxxiv. 9. Joſhua i. 5.

[q] Deut. xviii. 15. This prophecy is in a more eſpecial ſenſe applicable to Chriſt, the archetype of the prophets.

[r] Chap. iii. 7. v. 13—15. It is generally ſuppoſed in conformity with the ſentiments of the ancient Hebrew and Chriſtian churches, that the perſon who, in the inſtance laſt referred to, is related to have appeared to Joſhua, was God himſelf, as he is afterwards called the Lord (Jehovah in the Hebrew) ch. vi. 2. and Joſhua would not have been ſuffered to worſhip, much leſs required to reverence, a created being. Vid. Rev. xxii. 8, 9. It was therefore probably the divine λογος, the angel of the covenant, who appeared. Euſeb. Hiſt. Lib. I. c. 2.

ſeat

ſeat whereon reſted the divine preſence [s], conſulted God by the Urim and Thummim; and God anſwered him by a voice which iſſued from the mercy-ſeat. During the life of this excellent chief, the Iſraelites were preſerved in ſome obedience to God, and flouriſhed under his protection; and we contemplate with ſatisfaction, the deſcription of a well-governed and ſucceſsful people.

Joshua, the leader, as the hiſtorian of the Iſraelites, repreſents in lively colours the progreſs of a nation, led on to rapid and great victories by the guidance of the Lord; yet occaſionally checked in their career, that they might be convinced of their dependance on God for ſucceſs, and that it was not "their own arm" which had procured it. He relates, with all the animation of one who was appointed to be an agent in the ſcenes diſplayed, the ſucceſſive miracles that favoured and effected the conqueſt of the country; and unfolds the accompliſhment of the Moſaic prophecies concerning the poſſeſſion and diviſion of the promiſed land [t].

In the courſe of the narrative, Joſhua points out the attention paid to the divine precepts in the cir-

[s] The Shechinah was a viſible ſymbol of the divine preſence, which, after having conducted the Iſraelites through the wilderneſs, reſted in a glorious cloud between the Cherubims in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple; and hence the divine oracles were delivered. Vid. Lowman's Rationale of the Hebrew Ritual, Part II. ch. ii.

[t] Gen. xii. 7. xvii. 8. Exod. xv. 14—17. xxiii. 23. xxxiii. 2. Numb. xxxiv. 2. Deut. i. 7, 8. xxxii. 49.

cumciſion of the people [u]; in the ſetting up of the Tabernacle; and in the appointment of the cities of refuge. The book concludes with the account of the renewal of the covenant; and of the affecting exhortation and death of Joſhua, which terminates an intereſting hiſtory of about thirty years from A. M. 2553 to A. M. 2583 [x]: the whole of which is animated by the diſplay of God's attributes, and recommended by the nobleſt ſentiments of piety. It is

[u] The command given to Joſhua to circumciſe again the children of Iſrael, was only to renew a rite which had been omitted in the wilderneſs. "The reproach of Egypt," which was thereby "rolled away," meant probably the opprobrium incurred by the Egyptians, who might have neglected the rite in compliance with the requiſitions of the uncircumciſed Horites that over-ran Egypt, or who, perhaps, might not yet have adopted it. If we underſtand that the Egyptians upbraided the Iſraelites for the neglect of circumciſion, it will by no means follow, that the latter nation learnt it from the former; but rather that the Egyptians made it a ſubject of reproach to the Iſraelites, that they neglected in the wilderneſs what they profeſſed to conſider as a rite of diſtinction, and the ſeal of the promiſes. Vid. Shuckford's Conn. vol. iii. b. xii. and Patrick in Joſhua, ch. v. 6—9. Spencer conceives, that the reproach of Egypt was the ſlavery to which they had been ſubjected, and from which they were now reſcued and declared free, by this token of a free people. Vide Spencer de Leg. Heb. L. I. c. iv.

[x] Including the account of Eleazar's death, who outlived Joſhua about five or ſix years. This computation is likewiſe grounded on a ſuppoſition that Joſhua was employed ſeven years in completing the conqueſt of the country, and that he ſurvived it about eighteen years. Some do not admit that he governed the people ſo long. Vid. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. V. c. i.

occaſionally

occaſionally interſperſed with prophecies [y], and diſtinguiſhed throughout by every mark of fidelity and truth. Joſhua, like his predeceſſor, deſcribes the diſobedience and tranſgreſſions of the Jews, not concealing his own errors. He conſpires in the ſame zealous deſigns with Moſes, and earneſtly recommends an attention to the laws and ſtatutes which that legiſlator had delivered. The book muſt have been a moſt valuable poſſeſſion to the Iſraelites, as it contained the earlieſt and moſt authentic documents relative to the property of every tribe, and furniſhed to each the title of its reſpective inheritance.

It is neceſſary to remark, that there is ſome accidental derangement in the order of the chapters of this book, occaſioned probably by the mode of rolling up manuſcripts anciently obſerved. If chronologically placed, they ſhould be read thus: firſt chapter to the tenth verſe; then ſecond chapter; then from the tenth verſe to the end of the firſt chapter; afterwards ſhould follow the ſixth and conſecutive chapters; to the eleventh; then the twenty-ſecond chapter; and, laſtly, the twelfth and thirteenth chapters, to the twenty-fourth verſe of the latter [z].

Joshua ſucceeded Moſes in the government of Iſrael about A. M. 2553; and died in the 110th year of his age, A. M. 2578, at Timnah-ſerah; where he had retired, contemplating from Mount Ephraim the well-ordered and peaceful government which he

[y] Chap. iii. 10—17. vi. 26. compared with 1 Kings xvi. 34. Joſh. xxiii. 13—16.

[z] Bedford's Scrip. Chron. Book V. p. 590.

had eſtabliſhed [A]; and exhorting the people with his laſt words to a remembrance of God's mercy, and to an obſervance of his laws.

THE memory of Joſhua, and of his victories, was long preſerved, and his reputation ſpread among the heathen nations [B]. He is generally conſidered as the original of the Phœnician Hercules; and the ſcene of his victories, as well as the conqueſts themſelves, is ſtill diſcernable in the diſfigured accounts which are given concerning that fictitious hero [C]. It has been collected from monuments ſtill extant, that the Carthaginians were a colony of the Tyrians who fled from the exterminating ſword of Joſhua [D]; as alſo, that the inhabitants of Leptis in Africa, were primarily derived from Zidonians, who had

[A] The Vatican copy of the Septuagint verſion has the following addition annexed to the account of Joſhua's burial, in the thirtieth verſe of the laſt chapter: "There they put with him into the ſepulchre in which they buried him, the knives of flint with which he circumciſed the kingdom of Iſrael in Gilgal, when he brought them out of Egypt, as the Lord commanded them;" and they are there unto this day. The Alexandrian copy has it not. Vide Harmer, vol. iv. p. 398.

[B] Some traces of the miracle of the ſun and moon being ſtayed for a whole day by Joſhua, are diſcovered in the Chineſe records, as well as in the diſfigured accounts of Statius and Ovid. Vid. Martinii Hiſt. Sinic. Lib. 1. p. 37. Stat. Thebais, Lib. IV. l. 307. Ovid. Metamor. de Phaeton.

[C] Procop. Vandal. Lib. II. c. 10. Polyb. Frag. 114. Salluſt. Bellum Jugurth. The Mahometans relate many fabulous ſtories of Joſhua. Vid. Herbelot, Bib. Oriental, ſub voce Jeſchowa.

[D] Allix's Reflect. on Books of Old Teſt.

been

been compelled to forſake their country in conſequence of calamities brought upon it by the conqueſts of this great commander.

THE Samaritans are by ſome writers ſuppoſed to have received the book of Joſhua; there is ſtill extant a Samaritan book entitled, the book of Joſhua, which differs conſiderably from the Hebrew copy, containing a chronicle of events badly compiled from the death of Moſes to the time of the Emperor Adrian. It conſiſts of 47 chapters ſwelled with fabulous accounts. It is written in Arabic in the Samaritan character [E]. After having been long loſt, it was recovered by Scaliger, and depoſited at Leyden, in manuſcript, and has never been publiſhed.

THE Jews ſuppoſe Joſhua to have been the author of a prayer which they repeat in part on quitting the ſynagogue. It is in celebration of God's goodneſs for having granted them an inheritance ſuperior to that of the reſt of mankind [F].

[E] Fabric. Apocryph. V. Teſt. p. 876, and ſeq.
[F] Vagen's Tela Syriac, p. 223, and ſeq.

OF THE

BOOK OF JUDGES.

THIS Book has been generally attributed to Samuel, in agreement with the opinion of the Talmudical doctors [A]. Some writers have aſſigned

[A] Bava Bathra, c. i. Kimchi Abarb. Iſid. Lib. VI. c. ii. The Talmud, from חלמוד, doctrine, is a Jewiſh book, containing explanatory remarks on the law, and reverenced by the Jews, as much as, or more than the law, as the great ſource of their religious opinions. It conſiſts of two parts: the Miſchna, or text; and the Gemara, or complement. The former the Jews profeſs to have received as an oral law, delivered to Moſes by God; but in reality it conſiſts of traditions accumulated from the time of Simon, or Ezra, and contains ſome uſeful inſtructions. The Gemara is a commentary of wild fancies on the Miſchna. There are two Talmuds, that of Jeruſalem, and that of Babylon; the laſt of which is moſt eſteemed. It appeared in the ſixth or ſeventh century, about 200 years after the former. Maimonides publiſhed a good commentary on it. Vide Buxtorf. Recenſio oper: Talmud. Porta Moſis, in Pocock's works, vol. i. Morin. Exercit. Biblic. Lexic. Buxtorf. Rabbin. p. 2610. Prid. Con. Part I. B. V. Mark vii. 7, 8, 13. The Popes, where they have had influence, have often procured the deſtruction of the Talmuds, as containing pernicious opinions. Much truth, however, is concealed under the chimerical expoſitions and accounts therein contained.

it

it to Phinehas; ſome to Hezekiah; and ſome to Ezekiel; and others have ſuppoſed that Ezra collected it from ſuch memoirs as every judge reſpectively furniſhed of his own government. It ſeems, however, moſt probable, that Samuel was the author; who, being a prophet or ſeer, and deſcribed in the book of Chronicles as an hiſtorian, may reaſonably be ſuppoſed, inaſmuch as he was the laſt of the Judges, to have written this part of the Jewiſh hiſtory; ſince the inſpired writers alone were permitted to deſcribe thoſe relations, in which were interwoven the inſtructions and judgments of the Lord [B].

THE book appears to have been written after the eſtabliſhment of the regal government, ſince the author, in ſpeaking of preceding events, obſerves, that "in thoſe days there was no king in Iſrael [C];" which ſeems to imply that there were kings when he wrote. There is alſo ſome reaſon to think, that it was written before the acceſſion of David, ſince it is ſaid in the twenty-firſt verſe of the firſt chapter, that "the Jebuſites were ſtill in Jeruſalem," who were diſpoſſeſſed of that city early in the reign of David [D]. It was likewiſe written before the books of Samuel [E]; and therefore if the author be underſtood, as he is uſually ſuppoſed, to ſpeak in the thirtieth verſe of the eighteenth chapter, of that captivity [E] which happened

[B] Joſeph. cont. Apion. Lib. I.

[C] Chap. xix. 1. xxi. 25.

[D] 2 Sam. v. 6—8.

[E] Compare 2 Sam. xi. 21. with Judges ix. 53.

[F] The captivity here ſpoken of muſt have happened before the reign of David, who would not have ſuffered the

happened in the time of Eli, when the ark was captured by the Philiſtines, and the idol of Micah was deſtroyed [G]; there is no objection to the general opinion, which attributes the book to Samuel [H]; who may be conceived to have written it in Ramoth-Gilead, after the election of Saul.

THE book is properly inſerted between thoſe of Joſhua and Samuel, as the Judges were governors intermediate between Joſhua and the Kings of Iſrael. They were illuſtrious princes of the houſe of Judah [I], raiſed up by God, not in regular ſucceſſion, but as emergencies required, when the repentance of the Iſraelites influenced him to compaſſionate their diſtreſs, and to afford them deliverance from their dif-

idolatrous images to remain among his people. When the ark was captured, many of the Iſraelites muſt have been taken likewiſe; and the Pſalmiſt expreſsly calls this taking of the ark, "a captivity." Vid. Pſal. lxxviii. 60—62. as the wife of Phinehas lamented that then "the glory was departed from Iſrael." Vid. 1 Sam. iv. 22.

[G] 1 Sam. iv. 11. and ch. v. Selden de Syntag. I. de Diiſ. Syris, cap. ii. and Calmet on Judg. ch. xviii. 30.

[H] The word נביא, Nabia, which is uſed in this book, might well be employed by Samuel, who wrote the firſt part at leaſt of the firſt Book of Samuel. Vid. 1 Sam. ix. 9. The houſe of God means the Tabernacle, as in Joſhua.

[I] They were called Shophetim, in the Hebrew, which ſignifies judges. They had the ſupreme power under ſome reſtrictions; and without the enſigns of royalty, being miniſters of God, ſubſervient to the theocracy. Vid. chap. viii. 23. Some reckon fifteen and ſome ſixteen Judges. They were ſometimes elected by the people on the performance of great exploits, and generally continued for life.

ficulties.

ficulties. They frequently acted by a divine ſuggeſtion, and were endowed with preternatural ſtrength and fortitude [K.]

After the death of Joſhua, the people appear for a ſhort time to have had no regularly appointed governor [L], but to have acted in ſeparate tribes. They were for a few years retained in the ſervice of God, by the elders who ſurvived Joſhua, but afterwards fell into a ſtate of anarchy, for a period of which we have no account, but as to thoſe particulars ſcattered towards the beginning and concluſion of this book. We find, however, that the people proceeded to the conqueſt of the remaining part of the country, but that, gradually forgetting the inſtructions of Moſes, and of Joſhua, and notwithſtanding a rebuke which they received from an angel of God [M], they ſuffered the inhabitants to remain tributary among them; who became, as had been

[K] Chap. ii. 18. vi. 14, 34. xi. 29. xiv. 6, 19. The Jews imagine, without ſufficient reaſon, that they were endued with the ſpirit of prophecy. Vid. Maimon. More Nevoch. Par. II. c. xlv. Grot. in Jud. i. 1.

[L] In the Samaritan chronicle, it is ſaid, that Joſhua appointed his nephew Abel to ſucceed him, upon whom the government fell by lot; but this is a fabulous account. Vid. Saurin. Differt. ſur Heglon Roi des Moabites. Hotting. Smeg. Oriental, c. viii. p. 522.

[M] Chap. ii. 1. by the word מלאך αγγελος, nuntius, ſome underſtand a prophet, which it ſometimes ſignifies, as in Haggai i. 13. But there is no reaſon why we ſhould not ſuppoſe the meſſenger to have been an angel, as angels undoubtedly appeared on other occaſions, the miniſters of God's miraculous government of the Iſraelites.

repeatedly

repeatedly predicted, " ſcourges in their ſides, and thorns in their eyes," and, as it were, " ſnares and traps" to ſeduce them to idolatry [N]. For this they were puniſhed, and given up to their enemies, and held eight years in ſervitude to Cuſhan, king of Meſopotamia, till God raiſed up Judges to deliver them. Othniel appears to have been the firſt judge; though ſome writers ſay, that Simeon, and others, that Caleb [o] preceded him in the government of the people. During the intervals between the Judges, each tribe was governed by its reſpective elders;

[N] Exod. xxiii. 33. xxxiv. 12. Joſh. xxiii. 13. Judg. ii. 2. The Iſraelites were permitted to render tributary thoſe nations who ſubmitted to them, though they were to ſuppreſs their idolatrous worſhip, " to break down their images, and to deſtroy their groves." But thoſe nations who in defiance of God's declared favour oppoſed them, were to be deſtroyed; and as to the ſeven nations of Canaan, of thoſe who reſiſted, " nothing that breathed was to be ſaved alive;" that every trace of idolatry might be ſwept away. Vid. Deut. xx. 10—18. vii. 1—6. 1 Sam. xv. 5. Though this deſtruction was enjoined only in caſe of reſiſtance, yet with no idolatrous city whatever, were the Iſraelites allowed by the divine command, to make any league or covenant; for in theſe the authority of thoſe deities, whoſe ſanction muſt have been adjured, would have been admitted, and ſome toleration given to a worſhip that might have tended to the ſeduction of the Iſraelites. Vid. Exod. xxiii. 32. They were therefore enjoined, gradually, to extirpate the civil and religious communities of the land, and to render the people tributary and dependant as individuals. All theſe inſtructions, however, the people violated, and ſuffered for their diſobedience. Vid. Shuckford's Con. vol. iii. B. XII.

[O] Bedford's Script. Chron. Lib. V. c. iii.

affairs

affairs of importance being referred to the great council, or Sanhedrim [P].

The hiſtory of this book may be divided into two parts; the firſt containing an account of the Judges from Othniel to Samſon, ending at the ſixteenth chapter. The ſecond part deſcribing ſeveral remarkable particulars that occurred not long after the death of Joſhua, which are placed towards the end of the book in the ſeventeenth and following chapters, that they may not interrupt the courſe of the hiſtory. What relates to the two laſt Judges, Eli and Samuel, is recorded in the following book. The chronology of this period is entangled with many difficulties; but if we include the period of 34 years, which may be ſuppoſed to have intervened between the death of Joſhua and the judicature of Othniel, the book extends its hiſtory from A. M. 2578, to the death of Samſon, A. M. 2887, and the government of the Judges may be conceived to

[P] The great council appointed by Moſes, continued probably to exiſt, at leaſt, till the eſtabliſhment of the monarchical government, though there are no proofs that its members retained the gift of inſpiration. Whether the Sanhedrim were the ſame council continued, or a ſubſequent inſtitution in the time of the Maccabees, is uncertain. Like that, however, it conſiſted of 70 or 72 elders: theſe were moſtly Prieſts and Levites, over which the high-prieſt generally, but not neceſſarily, preſided. It decided on momentous affairs, civil and religious, and ſubſiſted to the time of Chriſt, but with authority diminiſhed in ſubjection to the Roman power. Matth. v. 21. Mark xiii. 9. Selden de Synod. Beauſobre's Introduct. to Script. There were ſeveral inferior and dependant Sanhedrims. The word is derived from συνεδριον, a council or aſſembly.

have

have continued from A. M. 2612, to the twenty-firſt year of Samuel's judicature, when Saul was anointed, A. M. 2929, that is, about 317 years [q].

The period ſtated in the book, if computed in ſucceſſion, would ſwell to a much greater number of years; but they muſt be conceived ſometimes to coincide as contemporary, being reckoned from different æras which cannot now be exactly aſcertained; and, perhaps, as Marſham has conjectured, ſome

[q] St. Paul appears to reckon 450 years from the diviſion of the land till the time of Samuel, (excluſive of Samuel's government, which is reckoned under the 40 years aſſigned in the next verſe to Saul) but as this computation would be inconſiſtent with other ſtatements in ſcripture, and eſpecially with that in 1 Kings vi. 1. where the fourth year of Solomon's reign is made to coincide with the 480th year after the deliverance from Egypt, Uſher accepts from ancient manuſcripts a different reading of Acts xiii. 20. according to which the 450 years are referred, not to the duration of the Judges, but to the period which intervened between the promiſe of Canaan made to Abraham, and the diviſion of the land. The preſent reading, however, is more agreeable to the ſcope of St. Paul's diſcourſe, as well as beſt ſupported by authority; and therefore various other ſolutions of the difficulties that reſult from this account, have been propoſed. Many chronologers have imagined that τετρακοσιοις is a miſtake of the copyiſt of the Acts, for τριακοσιοις; in which caſe St. Paul, ſpeaking looſely (ως), might well reckon 350 years; for if we deduct from 480 years the 47 years which intervened between the Exodus and the diviſion of the land, together with the 84 years which muſt be aſſigned to Samuel, Saul, David, and Solomon, before the foundation of the temple, we ſhall have exactly 349 years. Vid. Uſſer. Chron. Sac. c. xii. Poli Synop. in 1 Kings vi. 1.

of

of the Judges were coeval, reigning over different diſtricts.

The book of Judges furniſhes a lively deſcription of a fluctuating and unſettled nation; a ſtriking picture of the diſorders and dangers which prevailed in a republic without magiſtracy, when "the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through by-ways [R]," when few prophets were appointed to control the people [S], and "every one did that which was right in his own eyes [T]." It exhibits the conteſt of true religion with ſuperſtition; diſplays the beneficial effects that flow from the former; and repreſents the miſeries and evil conſequences of impiety. From the ſcenes of civil diſcord and violence which darken this hiſtory, St. Paul, or the author of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews, hath preſented us with ſome illuſtrious examples of faith in the characters of Gideon, Barak, Samſon, and Jephthah [U].

Amidst the great viciſſitude of events deſcribed in this book, in which the juſtice and mercies of God are conſpicuouſly ſhewn, we are much ſtruck with the account of the illuſtrious exploits of the Judges; of Sifera's defeat and death; of the victory of Gideon; of the puniſhment of Abimelech; of Jephthah's inconſiderate vow [X]; of the actions of Samſon;

[R] Chap. v. 6.

[S] We read but of two prophets in this book. Vid. chap. iv. 4. and vi. 8. The high-prieſt, however, had the power of conſulting God by means of the Urim and Thummim.

[T] Chap. xvii. 6. [U] Heb. xi. 32.

[X] It has been a ſubject of endleſs controverſy, whether Jephthah did really offer up his daughter "a burnt-offering to the

Samſon; of the flagitious conduct of the Benjamites; of the deſtruction of Gibeah; with the deſcription of many other particulars that enliven the narrative, which is likewiſe much embelliſhed by the beautiful ſong of Deborah and Barak, and the ſignificant parable of Jotham. Many of the ſacred writers, as well as St. Paul, allude to, or quote from, the book [Y]; and ſeveral relations contained in it point

the Lord," or only devote her to perpetual virginity, which might be conſidered as a ſacrifice, when every woman looked forward to the production of the promiſed ſeed. The Jews and primitive church believed, that he did actually immolate her. In favour of this opinion, it has been obſerved, that it is ſupported by the conſtruction of the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate verſions, and by the Chaldee paraphraſe; that if the vow extended not to the life, Jephthah might have "gone back;" Levit. xxvii. 2—8. That a devotion to celibacy was uncuſtomary among the Jews, and muſt have been diſhonourable; that it could not have been requiſite in a dedication to God's ſervice, nor a ſufficient ſubject for that general lamentation which prevailed on the occaſion, and was continued with ſuperſtitious obſervance till later times; and, laſtly, that if Jephthah eſteemed himſelf bound to give up every conſideration, rather than violate a ſolemn engagement with God, he might, for his intention, or general character, be commended by St. Paul, however cenſurable and extravagant his promiſe and the performance of it might have been. See Heb. xi. Pſa. xv. 4. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. V. c. 9. Tertul. adv. Marcion. Chryſoſt. Hom. de Jeptha. Epiphan. adv. Hæres. Lib. III. vol. i. p. 1055. & Dodwell. Dr. Randolph propoſes by a new rendering of the text, to maintain that Jephthah vowed to dedicate whatſoever or whomſoever came out of the door of his houſe, to meet him; *and alſo*, to offer a burnt offering. See his Diſcourſe, and on Levit. xxvii. 28, 29. Concerning the Cherem, ſee Selden de Jure. Nat. & Gent. c. 6, 7.

[Y] 1 Sam. xii. 9—11. 2 Sam. xi. 21. Pſa. lxxxviii. 11. Iſaiah ix. 4. x. 26. and perhaps Matt. ii. 23. comp. with Jud. xiii. 5.

book [Y]; and ſeveral relations contained in it point out the origin of numberleſs heathen fables [Z]. The whole period is diſtinguiſhed by a diſplay of extraordinary events, and by the moſt glaring and miraculous proofs of divine interpoſition. The hiſtory of God's government muſt neceſſarily be characterized by the marks and demonſtrations of his immediate agency; and the ſelected inſtruments of his will may well be expected to exhibit a ſucceſſion of unprecedented exploits.

It ſhould be obſerved, indeed, that ſome of the actions, which in this book are repreſented to have been ſubſervient to God's deſigns, were juſtifiable only on the ſuppoſition of divine warrant, which ſuperſeded all general rules of conduct [A]. Without this, the deeds of Ehud [B] and of Jael [C]

[Y] 1 Sam. xii. 9—11. 2 Sam. xi. 21. Pſa. lxxxviii. 11. Iſaiah ix. 4. x. 26. and perhaps Matt. ii. 23. comp. with Jud. xiii. 5.

[Z] The ſtory of Niſus's hair; of the golden hair given by Neptune to his grandſon Pterela, which rendered him invincible while uncut; that of Hercules and Omphale; of the pillars of Hercules; of the death of Cleomedes Aſtypalæus; of Agamemnon and Iphigenia; and to enumerate no more, that of the Sabine rape, appear to have been ingenious fictions fabricated from the accounts of this book.

[A] God unqueſtionably may authoriſe what without his ſanction would be unjuſt; as where he commands the Iſraelites "to ſpoil the Egyptians," and to extirpate the nations of Canaan. Vid. Exod. iii. 22. Deut. xx. 10—18.

[B] We are not to conceive, becauſe God "raiſed up the judges," that he directed them in all their actions. The relation, however, ſeems to intimate, that Ehud on this occaſion acted by divine authority.

[C] Jael's conduct, like that of Rahab, as deſcribed in the book

might be pronounced cenſurable for their treachery, however prompted by commendable motives. And with reſpect to ſome other particulars, it is obvious, that the ſacred author by no means vindicates all that he relates; and that the indiſcriminate maſſacre of the people of Jabeſh-Gilead, and the rape of the virgins at Shiloh, were certainly ſtamped with the marks of injuſtice and cruelty; and muſt be condemned on thoſe principles which the ſcriptures have elſewhere furniſhed, though in the brevity of the ſacred hiſtory they are here recorded without comment. The characters, likewiſe, of God's appointed miniſters, however ſpoken of in this book, and in other parts of ſcripture, as commendable for their general excellence, or particular merits, are preſented to us in ſome points of view, as highly defective and blameable. It is eaſy, however, to diſcriminate the ſhades from the light, and to perceive, that in the deſcription of ſuch mixed characters as that of Samſon, much is detailed as reprehenſible; and while we are led to admire his heroic patriotiſm, we are taught alſo to condemn his criminal infatuation and blind confidence in Delilah.

With reſpect to thoſe objections, which a miſtaken levity has ſuggeſted againſt the credibility of

book of Joſhua, appears to have ariſen from a deſire of aſſiſting in God's declared deſigns in favour of his choſen people. As the exploit is approved in the hymn of Deborah, an inſpired propheteſs, we may ſuppoſe it to have been performed in compliance with a divine impulſe, otherwiſe it could not have been a ſubject of praiſe. Some, however, have thought, that Deborah only foretels Jael's ſecular happineſs and future celebrity.

ſome

ſome tranſactions recorded in the book, they proceed either from a want of attention to thoſe conſtructions which the reſearches of the learned have enabled them to make [D]; or from a diſregard to the character of the times deſcribed, when a boundleſs enthuſiaſm reſulted from a confidence in the divine favour.

[D] The relation, for inſtance, of Samſon's ſetting fire to the corn of the Philiſtines, cannot reaſonably be queſtioned by thoſe who conſider the character of Samſon; and the great abundance of foxes (or thoes or jackals) that prevailed in Judæa, which, indeed, was ſo remarkable, that many cities, and even provinces, were denominated after the word which we tranſlate foxes. Vid. 1 Sam. xiii. 17. Joſh. xv. 28. xix. 42. Judg. i. 35. alſo Cantic. ii. 15. Some writers, indeed, think that inſtead of ſchualim, *foxes*, we ſhould read ſchoalim, *ſheaves*, and tranſlate zanab, *the extreme end*, inſtead of the *tail*. Vide Bernard Repub. des Lett. p. 407. Stackhouſe's Hiſt. of Bib. Book V. vol. i. The Vulpinaria, or feaſt of the foxes, obſerved among the Romans, might have derived its origin from this tranſaction, ſome of the particulars of which Ovid deſcribes in a fabulous account. Vid. Faſt. Lib. IV. L. 684. et ſeq. Bochart. Hieros, Lib. III. c. xiii. The extraordinary ſtrength of Samſon is not to be conſidered as the phyſical effect of his hair, though God judged proper to render the continuance of the former dependant on the preſervation of the latter, which was the mark of his conſecration to God as a Nazarite.

OF THE

BOOK OF RUTH.

THE Book of Ruth is a kind of fupplement or appendix to the Book of Judges, and may be conſidered as an introduction to the hiſtory of David, [A], related in the Books of Samuel. In the Hebrew canon it compoſed but one book with the former; and though various opinions have been entertained reſpecting its chronology [B], it is properly placed in our Bibles between the books of Judges and Samuel [C]. The famine which occaſioned Elimelech to leave his country, is ſaid to have come to paſs "in the days when the Judges ruled;" hence ſome have aſſigned the beginning of the hiſtory to the time of Gideon, who was raiſed up in defence

[A] Euſeb. Hiſt. Lib. VI. c. xxv. Hieron. Prol. Gal. Aug. de Doct. Chriſt. Lib. II. c. viii.

[B] Houbigant Bib. Pref. to vol. ii.

[C] The modern Jews place Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Eccleſiaſtes, and Eſther, immediately after the Pentateuch, giving Ruth ſometimes the firſt, and ſometimes the fifth place.

of

of Iſrael, about A. M. 2759 [D], and under whom a famine is related to have happened [E]; notwithſtanding which, ſome Jewiſh writers ſuppoſe the hiſtory to have occurred much earlier, in the time of Ehud [F].

THE chief difficulty which occurs in ſettling the chronology of this period, ariſes from a genealogical account of St. Matthew [G], in which it is ſtated that Boaz, who was the huſband of Ruth, and the great grandfather of David [H], was the ſon of Salmon by Rachab; for if by Rachab we ſuppoſe to be meant, as is uſually underſtood, Rahab [I], the harlot, who protected

[D] Patrick, in chap. i. 1.

[E] Judges vi. 3—6.

[F] Seder Olam. cap. xii.

[G] Matt. i. 5, 6.

[H] Ruth iv. 21, 22. and Matth. i. 5, 6.

[I] We cannot now diſcover any motive which ſhould have induced St. Matthew to mention Rachab in the genealogy of Chriſt, unleſs ſhe were ſome perſon previouſly ſpoken of in ſcripture; but many reaſons may be aſſigned why ſhe ſhould be introduced in the lineage, if ſhe were the Rahab whoſe conduct is mentioned by Joſhua, (and who, though ſtiled זונה, zônah, in the Hebrew, and πορνη, by the evangeliſts, is celebrated as an example of faith), ſtill, however, it may be diffidently ſuggeſted, that the chronological differences would be leſs conſiderable, if we could ſuppoſe her to have been a different perſon; and that the 400 years which intervened between the birth of Pharez, and the time of Shamgar, were filled up by Boaz and his ſix immediate anceſtors. As a ſlight ſupport to which, it may be remarked, that the wife of Salmon is ſpelt Ραχαβ by St. Matthew, whereas in Hebrews xi. 31. and in James ii. 25. the harlot's name is written Ρααβ, as

protected Joſhua's ſpies, about A. M. 2552, it is difficult to conceive that only three perſons, Boaz, Obed, and Jeſſe, ſhould have intervened between her and David, who was not born till about 2919. We muſt, however, in this caſe conclude, either with the learned Uſher, that the anceſtors of David, as eminent for righteouſneſs, or as deſigned to be conſpicuous, becauſe in the lineage of the Meſſiah, were bleſſed with extraordinary length of life [K]; or elſe that the ſacred writers mentioned in the genealogy only ſuch names as were diſtinguiſhed and known among the Jews. If however Boaz be conſidered as the grandfather of David, the hiſtory cannot well be aſſigned to the time of Eli [L], under whoſe pontificate it is ſtated to have happened by Joſephus [M], but ſhould be underſtood to have come to paſs at ſome earlier period; not ſo far back as Shamgar, where Uſher has placed it in the 268th

in the ſeptuagint verſion of Joſhua ii. 1. There is no mention in the Book of Joſhua, or in any part of the Old Teſtament, of Rahab's marriage with Salmon.

[K] Uſſer. Chron. Sac. cap. xii. Poli Synop. in Ruth. And in Matt. i. 5. Patrick, Whitby, &c.

[L] The famine which occaſioned Naomi to reſide ten years in Moab, could not have come to paſs ſo late as in the days of Eli, from the tenth year of whoſe judicature to the birth of David were only forty years. Vid. Ruth i. 1, 4. Acts xiii. 21. 2 Sam. v. 4. for we cannot ſuppoſe ſo ſhort a ſpace of time only as thirty-nine or forty years to have intervened between the birth of Obed and that of his grandſon David, who was the youngeſt of eight ſons of Jeſſe. Vid. 1 Sam. xvi. 10, 11.

[M] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. V. c. 11.

year

year of the world, about 133 after the conqueſt of Canaan, but probably about the year 2754 [N].

THE book has been by ſome conſidered as the production of Hezekiah; by others it has been attributed to Ezra; but it was in all probability written by Samuel, agreeably to the opinion of many Jews and Chriſtians [O]; and the prophet may be ſuppoſed by this addition to the Book of Judges, to have brought down the hiſtory to the time of his own birth. It certainly was written not only after the Judges had ceaſed to rule, but after the birth, if not after the anointing of David [P]; whoſe deſcent from Judah the ſacred writer ſeems to have deſigned to certify, as according to the prophecy of Jacob, the Meſſiah was to ſpring from that tribe [Q]; and with this view he traces back the lineage of Boaz to Pharez, the ſon of Judah [R], and grandſon of Jacob [S].

THE book contains an account of the converſion of Ruth, a Moabiteſs, and according to Jewiſh tradition, of the royal race of Moab, which nation was deſcended from Lot [T], and ſettled near the land of Judah, at the end of the ſalt ſea. Ruth having mar-

[N] Chron. Sac. Par. I. c. xii. Du Pin, Lightfoot, &c.

[O] Talmud, Schalſch. Abarb. Brentius, Huet. Druſius, Patrick, &c.

[P] Chap. i. 1. iv. 22. It is probable, that David was not pointed out as an object of attention to the ſacred hiſtorians till he was ſelected for the throne.

[Q] Gen. xlix. 10.

[R] Gen. xxxviii. 29.

[S] Gen. xxix. 35.

[T] Gen. xix. 37.

ried Mahlon, the ſon of Elimelech, who had ſojourned in Moab, on account of a famine which prevailed in Judæa, reſolved, on the death of Mahlon, to accompany her mother-in-law in the return to her country. As Mahlon was of the houſe of Judah, Ruth relied probably on the promiſes made to that tribe, and had certainly become a proſelyte to the Hebrew religion [u]. After their arrival at Bethlehem, the former reſidence of Naomi, Ruth was compelled, by her diſtreſs, to claim kindred with Boaz, who, as the law of Moſes directed [x], took her to wife, and begat a ſon, from whom David deſcended.

It may be here obſerved, that the Holy Spirit, by recording the adoption of a Gentile woman into that family from which Chriſt was to derive his origin, might intend to intimate the comprehenſive deſign of the chriſtian diſpenſation [y].

It muſt be remarked, alſo, that in the eſtimation of the Jews it was diſgraceful to David to have derived his birth from a Moabiteſs; and Shimei, in his

[u] Cap. i. 16.

[x] The ancient law ratified by Moſes in Deut. xxv. 5. is ſuppoſed to have applied only to the brother, or according to the Rabbins, only to the elder brother by the ſame father. Cuſtom, however, ſeems to have extended the obligation of marrying the widow of the deceaſed to the next of kin. Vid. Ruth i. 13. Boaz was only a kinſman of Elimelech, and by his marriage with Ruth, he fulfilled the law in its extended interpretation, as well as that in Levit. xxv. 24, 25. Vid. Selden. de Succeſs. in bona, c. xv. Uxor. Hebr. Lib. c. xii.

[y] Gen. xlix. 10.

revilings

revilings againſt him, is ſuppoſed by the Jews to have tauntingly reflected on his deſcent from Ruth. This book, therefore, contains an intrinſic proof of its own verity, inaſmuch as it records a circumſtance ſo little flattering to the ſovereign of Iſrael [z]; and it is ſcarce neceſſary to appeal to its admiſſion into the canon of ſcripture for a teſtimony of its authentic character; or to mention that the evangeliſts, in deſcribing our Saviour's deſcent, follow its genealogical accounts [A].

THE ſtory related in this book is extremely intereſting:—the widowed diſtreſs of Naomi; her affectionate concern for her daughters; the reluctant departure of Orpah; the dutiful attachment of Ruth; and the ſorrowful return to Bethlehem, are very beautifully told. The ſimplicity of manners, likewiſe, which is ſhewn in the account of Ruth's induſtry and attention to Naomi; of the elegant charity of Boaz [B]; and of his acknowledgment of his kindred with Ruth, affords us a very pleaſing contraſt to the turbulent ſcenes which had been deſcribed in the precedent book. The reſpect, likewiſe, which the Iſraelites paid to the Moſaic law [c], and their

[z] Hieron. in Tradit. Heb. ad 1 Kings iii. Calmet's Preface to Ruth, and Ruth iv. 22.

[A] Matt. i. 3—6. Luke iii. 32, 33.

[B] Chap. ii. 16. Howel's Hiſt. of Bible, vol. i. Book IV. and Thomſon's Palemon and Lavinia. Strangers were allowed to glean by the charitable precepts of the Moſaic Law. Vid. Levit. xix. 9, 10. Deut. xxiv. 19.

[c] Chap. iv. 5, 10. Buxtorf. de Sponſal. & Divorr. ſect. 27.

obſervance of ancient cuſtoms [D], are repreſented in a very lively and animated manner. St. Jerom has remarked, that Ruth in her wandering condition, verified the prophecy of Iſaiah, who predicted that the "daughters of Moab ſhould be as a wandering bird caſt out of the neſt [E]."

[D] Chap. iv. 7. The form of redemption here referred to was apparently different from the degrading ceremony obſerved towards him who rejected his brother's wife, as enjoined in Deut. xxv. 9. though Joſephus conceives that it was the ſame conciſely deſcribed, Antiq. Lib. V. c. xi. The Chaldee paraphraſe repreſents the kinſman to have drawn off his right-hand glove, inſtead of his ſhoe. The mark of transfer among the more modern Jews was an handkerchief, as R. Solomon Jarchi informs us. Vid. Selden de Jure, Nat. & Gent. Juxt. Diſc. Heb. c. v. Vid. alſo Ruth iv. 11. and Seld. Uxor. Heb. Lib. II. c. xii.

[E] Iſa. xvi. 2. Hieron. Epiſt. ad Paulin.

OF THE

FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

THE relations contained in the Book of Ruth were a kind of digreſſion in the ſacred hiſtory, with a particular view; but the general thread is now reſumed reſpecting the Judges of Iſrael; and we are furniſhed in this, and in the following Book, with an account of the events and occurrences which happened in the time of the two laſt Judges, Eli and Samuel; and of the two firſt Kings, Saul and David. It is uncertain whether theſe books are called the books of Samuel, becauſe he was the author of them, or only becauſe his hiſtory conſtitutes a principal part of the ſacred account. They are in the Vulgate [A] ſtiled

[A] The Vulgate was a very ancient verſion of the Bible into Latin, but by whom, or at what period it was made, is not known. The Old Teſtament of this verſion was tranſlated from the Septuagint. It was in general uſe till the time of St. Jerom, and called alſo the Italic verſion. St. Jerom's tranſlation was made immediately from the Hebrew into Latin, or was the Vulgate corrected by the Hebrew? It was executed about A. D. 384, and it was gradually received into the Weſtern Church, in preference to all preceding verſions. It was publiſhed at Paris, by

ſtiled the firſt and ſecond Book of Kings [B], as two of thoſe four books which contain the hiſtory of the Kings of Iſrael and Judah.

THE two books of Samuel were in the Hebrew canon conſidered but as one. The Talmudiſts [C] ſuppoſe that Samuel wrote the twenty-four firſt chapters of the firſt book, and that the reſt was furniſhed by the prophets Gad and Nathan. This opinion is founded upon theſe words in the firſt book of Chronicles [D]. "Now the acts of David the king, firſt and laſt, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the ſeer, and in the book of Nathan

by Martianay and Pouget, in 1693. The preſent Vulgate, which is declared authentic by the Council of Trent, is the ancient Italic verſion, reviſed and improved by the labours of St. Jerom and others. This is the only tranſlation allowed by the church of Rome, and it is uſed by that church upon all occaſions, excepting that, in the Miſſal and Pſalms, ſome paſſages, or the whole of the ancient Vulgate, are retained, as are the Apocryphal Books, many of which St. Jerom did not tranſlate. There are two principal editions of the received Vulgate, one publiſhed by Pope Sixtus the Fifth, in 1590, the other by Clement the Eighth, which differs much from the former, though both are declared authentic from the Papal Chair, with much inconſiſtency, as the Proteſtants contend, but as the Papiſts maintain only with the latitude of a corrected impreſſion. Vide Kennicott's State of the printed Hebrew Text, and James's Bellam. Papale, and Treatiſe on the Corruption of Scripture. Some parts of the ancient Italic verſion, of which the copies are now loſt, have been recovered from citations in the writings of the Fathers, and is publiſhed with ſupplementary additions, in Walton's Polyglot.

[B] Theſe and the two ſucceeding books are called in the Greek βασιλειων, the books "of kingdoms."

[C] Bava Bathra, cap. i. Kimchi.

[D] 1 Chron. xxix. 29.

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the prophet, and in the book of Gad the ſeer;" and it is approved by many writers of conſiderable authority [E]; who maintain that the prophets were the hiſtorians of contemporary events. It will appear evident, at leaſt, that the books of Samuel were written before either the books of Kings or of Chronicles, if we compare them together; for in each of theſe laſt-mentioned books many circumſtances are manifeſtly taken and repeated from the books of Samuel. We may therefore aſſent to the general opinion, that Samuel was the author of at leaſt the greater part of the firſt book [F]; and probably he compoſed it towards the latter end of his life [G]. Certain, however, it is, from its admiſſion to the canon, as well as from the predictions which it con-

[E] Huet. Demonſt. Evang. Prop. IV. Iſid. Orat. Lib. VI. chap. ii. R. Kimchi, &c.

[F] Procopius Gazæus informs us, that the Syrians call the book the prophecy of Samuel.

[G] Chap. v. 5. vi. 18. xxx. 25. ix. 9. In this laſt paſſage Samuel incidentally obſerves, that they who in his time and in that of Saul, were called prophets, were anciently denominated ſeers. The word prophet, (Nabi) was in uſe, indeed, in the time of Moſes or Abraham. Vid. Gen. xx. 7. But it then only implied a man favoured of God; whereas in the time of Samuel, it was appropriated to one who foreſaw future events. Vid. 1 Sam. iii. 20. x. 5. xix. 24. In the latter part of Samuel's life, the word ſeer might have become nearly obſolete, though occaſionally uſed in, and after his time. But perhaps this remark might have been afterwards inſerted for the inſtruction of later times, as poſſibly were ſome few other particulars. Vid. vii. 15. xiii. 5. xxvii. 8.

tains,

tains, that the book was the production of a prophet; not to mention that it is referred to by our Saviour, in vindication of his disciples [H]. The first book of Samuel contains a space of near eighty years, if we reckon from the birth of Samuel, about or soon after A. M. 2868, to the death of Saul, which happened A. M. 2948.

THE history opens with an account of the birth of Samuel. It describes his consecration to the ministry, and his appointment to the prophetic office; the capture of the ark; and the completion of God's judgments on the house of Eli; the curse on those who possessed the ark; its return, and the signal punishment of such as daringly prophaned its sanctity [I]; the election of Saul in conformity to the unadvised desire of the Israelites for a King [K]; the wars

[H] Comp. 1 Sam. xx. 16. with Matt. xii. 3, 4.

[I] Chap. vi. 19. The text, as it now stands, represents 50,070 men of Bethshemesh to have been smitten upon this occasion for the presumptuous violation of God's express command. Vid. Numb. iv. 20. But the original words are more properly translated by Bochart: "He smote threescore and ten men, fifty out of a thousand men;" that is, the number being 1400, God smote 70, a twentieth part. Josephus understood the passage thus; and it must be observed, in support of this interpretation, that Bethshemesh was but a village. Vid. Patrick on 1 Sam. vi. 19.

[K] The impropriety of this request will be more obvious, if we recollect that God had condescended to be held in the character of a temporal King to the Israelites, residing, as it were, among them, and issuing his decrees from the Tabernacle; to require a King was therefore to reject his Theocracy.

wars and evils which arofe, as had been foretold [L], in conſequence of this change of government; the ſins and rejection of Saul; the anointing David, and the firſt diſplay of his piety and heroiſm [M]; the diſintereſted friendſhip of Jonathan and David; the envious and ungenerous ſuſpicions of Saul; the death of Samuel; the appearance of his ſpirit [N], denouncing God's judgments againſt the impiety

Theocracy. Vid. chap. viii. 7. xii. 12. Joſeph. cont. Apion. Lib. II.

[L] Chap. viii. 11—18.

[M] The character of David is very beautifully delineated by the ſacred writer, and his actions are placed before us in a manner well calculated to produce effect. He is firſt introduced to our notice as "a valiant and prudent man," anointed on the rejection of Saul; and the hiſtorian then goes back to relate an atchievement of David's "youth;" for it appears that the combat with Goliah was previous in point of time to the driving away of the evil ſpirit of Saul, otherwiſe Saul and Abner muſt have known "whoſe ſon the ſtripling was;" and therefore the ſeventeenth chapter records particulars prior in point of chronology to thoſe related in the ſixteenth chapter. Vid. Warburt. Div. Legat. B. IV. ſect. 6. note E. Such anticipations are not uncuſtomary in the ſacred writings, and they give much animation to the hiſtory; and the narration ſhould be read in the following order: ch. xvii. xviii. 9. xvi. 14—23. Some writers, however, conſider the 39 verſes which are omitted in the Vatican copy of the Septuagint, as an interpolation introduced into the Hebrew text, and the Alexandrian copy of the Greek verſion.

[N] Chap. xxviii. The moſt probable and beſt ſupported opinion concerning this relation is, that God ſuffered Samuel's departed ſpirit, or a miraculous repreſentation of his perſon, to appear to Saul, and, as a puniſhment for his preſumptuous impiety, to diſcloſe his impending fate. The text poſitively calls him Samuel, ("himſelf," in the original) and he propheſied truly: for

piety of Saul; in the accompliſhment of which the book terminates, with the account of the miſerable fate of Saul, and of his ſons. The ſacred writer illuſtrates the characters, and deſcribes the events of his hiſtory in the moſt engaging manner. The weak indulgence of Eli is well contraſted with the firm piety of Samuel. The riſing virtues of David, and the ſad depravity of Saul, are ſtrikingly oppoſed. The ſentiments and inſtructions ſcattered through the work are excellent; and the inſpired hymn of Hannah, which much reſembles that of the bleſſed Virgin [o], furniſhes us with a grand prophecy of Chriſt, who is here for the firſt time in ſcripture deſcribed as the Meſſiah [p], or the anointed of the Lord; as the exalted ſovereign and appointed judge of the earth.

SAMUEL, the reputed author of this book, was obtained by the prayers of Hannah [q], and dedicated from his infancy to God. He appeared as a

for "on the morrow," that is, ſoon after, Saul and his ſons were ſlain, and the hoſt of Iſrael defeated. The woman was herſelf terrified at a real appearance, when probably ſhe deſigned a deception, and was preparing her incantations. Vid. Eccluſ xlvi. 20. Calmet. Differt. Pref. to 1 Sam. Note in Sept. 1. 1 Chron. x. 13. Juſtin Martyr, Dial. Tryphon, and Commentators.

[o] Com. 1 Sam. ii. 1—10. with Luke i. 46—55.

[p] 1 Sam. ii. 10. The Meſſiah and the anointed, are ſynonymous. משוח, Maſcuach, is derived from משח, Maſchach, to anoint.

[q] The word Samuel, according to the Hebrew derivation, implies one deſired of God.

prophet at a time when the prophetic ſpirit was but rarely known; he accepted the ſupreme power in the government of his country [R] without ambition, and executed the important duties of his office with irreproachable integrity. When required by God, he reſigned his power without reluctance; and in compliance with the divine commands, elected two ſtrangers in the government, to the excluſion of his ſons. He was much feared and reſpected by Saul, and the whole nation; and was allowed by that monarch to judge Iſrael "all the days of his life [S]." The author of Eccleſiaſticus juſtly celebrates him as a favourite ſervant of God, a righteous judge, and a faithful prophet [T]. He was addreſſed by many revelations from God [U]; and the miraculous circumſtances that demonſtrated his appointment, as well as the prophetic ſpirit which inſpired him, were

[R] Some deny that Samuel ſucceeded to the prieſthood, as he was not of the poſterity of Aaron, and aſſert that he only ſucceeded to the judicature. Vid. Hieron. cont. Jovin. Lib. I. and in Pſa. xcviii. others maintain that he was dignified with both characters. Vid. Auguſt. in Pſal. xcviii. He is not reckoned in the catalogue of prieſts given by Joſephus. Vid. Selden de Succeſſ. ad Pontiff. Lib. I. cap. xiv.

[S] 1 Sam. vii. 15. Patrick obſerves that this verſe may mean, that Samuel was ſo diligent in the diſcharge of his office, that he gave himſelf no reſt, but ſat to judge cauſes every day. Some conſider it as a ſubſequent interpolation. Samuel may be ſuppoſed to have died about two years before Saul, in the ninety-eighth year of his age.

[T] Ecclus xlvi. 13—20.

[U] Chap. iii. Pſa. xcix. 6, 7. Acts iii. 24.

ſo

ſo conſpicuous, "that all Iſrael, from Dan to Beerſheba, knew that Samuel was eſtabliſhed to be a prophet of the Lord, who let none of his words fall to the ground." His firſt predictions concerning the deſtruction which impended over the houſe of Eli were literally completed [x], and theſe were followed by others which came to paſs with ſtriking exactneſs [y].

[x] Chap. iii. 11—18. Vid. alſo Chap. ii. 34, 35. which contain prophecies that were verified in Zadock and his predeceſſor Abiathar, but which were more fully accompliſhed in Chriſt, the great high-prieſt "for ever." Vid. 1 Kings i. 39. ii. 26, 27. 1 Chron. xxix. 22. Heb. v. 10.

[y] Chap. viii. 11—18. x. 2—9. xii. 25. xxviii. 19.

OF

OF THE

SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

IF we aſſent to the opinion of the Talmudiſts, that Samuel did not continue the hiſtory beyond the twenty-fourth chapter of the Firſt Book of Samuel, we may aſſign this Second Book, as well as the latter part of the former, to the prophets Gad and Nathan. Many learned Jews have contended, from a fanciful reſemblance of ſtile between theſe and the works of Jeremiah, that this prophet compiled them from the memoirs of Samuel, Gad, and Nathan [A]. We may conclude then, either that they were written entirely by Samuel, or partly by him, and finiſhed by ſome of thoſe inſpired perſons that iſſued from the ſchools of the prophets, which he is ſuppoſed to have eſtabliſhed. Theſe were colleges for the inſtruction of ſelect youths in the knowledge of the law, and

[A] Bava Bathra, Abarbinel, Grotius, and Locke. In 2 Macc. ii. 13. it is ſaid, that Nehemiah gathered together the acts of David, with other writings; which perhaps means only that he collected them for the library which he is there ſaid to have founded.

the exercise of devotions [B]. Upon many of these disciples God conferred the spirit of prophecy; and probably most of the subsequent prophets were elected from these schools [C]; not, indeed, necessarily, but because therein fitted and prepared for the sacred influence. They were under the direction of a prophet really inspired, who was considered as a father to the society; and Samuel was probably the first who possessed that dignified character [D].

This Second Book of Samuel bears an exact relation to the preceding history, and is likewise connected with that which succeeds. We see throughout the effects of that enmity against other nations which had been implanted into the minds of the Israelites by the Mosaic Law, and which gradually tended to the extirpation of idolatry.

The history contains a period of near forty years, from about A. M. 2948 to 2988. It describes the establishment and prosperity of David's reign; which he deserved, as well by his generous respect for the memory of Saul, as by the excellency of those many other qualities which his maturer piety displayed. It relates the extinction of Saul's family, and David's grateful and unsuspicious kindness to the surviving

[B] 1 Sam. x. 5.

[C] For Amos informs us, that he was not, chap. vii. 14. It was likewise proverbially said, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" Is he raised to a dignity to which he was not disciplined by his education?

[D] Whitby's School of the Prophets; Smith's Discourse on Prophecy.

son

ſon of Jonathan. The inſpired author then records the fall of David; and exhibits a ſad proof of the unconſcious depravity to which the nobleſt minds may be ſeduced by paſſion. He repreſents to us God's anger ſoftened, but not appeaſed, by David's repentance, who was ſoon after puniſhed by the death of the child, and many domeſtic calamities. The tranſgreſſion of Ammon was the firſt conſequence of his bad example; and "evil roſe up againſt him out of his own houſe [E]," in the ambitious intrigues and rebellion of Abſalom. We ſoon behold him a degraded and fugitive ſovereign, reviled by his meaneſt ſubjects; and ſeverely puniſhed for his conduct toward Uriah, by the inceſtuous outrage of his ſon [F]. The ſubmiſſive repentance, however, and reſtored virtues of David, procured his pardon and reeſtabliſhment on his throne; which he dignified by the diſplay of the greateſt moderation, juſtice, and piety. If in the exultation of his recovered proſperity, God ſuffered him [G] to be betrayed into an oſtentatious numbering of the people, "his heart ſmote him" to immediate repentance, and he piouſly threw himſelf on God's mercy, and intreated that he only might ſuffer from the indignation which he had provoked. The viciſſitude of events which the book deſcribes; the fall and reſtoration of David; the effects of his errors, and his return to righteouſneſs, are repreſented in the moſt intereſting manner,

[E] Nathan's prophetic threat, chap. xii. 11.
[F] Chap. xvi. 21, 22.
[G] Chap. xxiv. 1. and 1 Chron. xxi. 1.

and furniſh valuable leſſons to mankind. The author in the conciſe ſtile of ſacred hiſtory, ſelects only the moſt ſtriking features of character; and the moſt important incidents of thoſe revolutions of which he treats; and among the conſpicuous beauties of the book, we can never ſufficiently admire the feeling lamentation over Saul and Jonathan [H]; the expreſſive parable of Nathan; and the triumphant hymn of David.

THE prophecies contained in the book are, firſt, that which blended temporal and ſpiritual bleſſings in the promiſes relative to Solomon and the Meſſiah; the permanency of David's throne, and the perpetuity of that kingdom, which is prefigured [I]. Secondly, the predictive denunciations of Nathan [K]; and, laſtly, the figurative deſcriptions of David's pſalm [L]; by whom the "ſpirit of the Lord ſpake," aſſuring him of an everlaſting covenant [M]."

THIS book, likewiſe, as well as the former, contains other intrinſic proofs of its verity. By deſcribing without diſguiſe the miſconduct of thoſe cha-

[H] This ſong is ſuppoſed to have been ſung at the funeral of Saul and Jonathan; it being cuſtomary among the Jews to ſolemnize the obſequies of their friends with dirges accompanied by muſic. 2 Chron. xxxv. 24. Matt. ix. 23. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. III. c. 9. Maim. c. xiv. ſect. 23.

[I] Chap. vii. 12, 16. Heb. i. 5. David ſeems to have apprehended the great extent of God's promiſes, and in conſequence to have burſt out in rapturous acknowledgment of his goodneſs. 2 Sam. vii. 19—21. 1 Chron. xvii. 17.

[K] Chap. xii. 11—14.

[L] Chap. xxii.

[M] Chap. xxiii. 2, 5,

racters

racters, that were highly reverenced among the people, the ſacred writer demonſtrates his impartial ſincerity; and by appealing to monuments that atteſted the truth of his relations when he wrote, he furniſhed every poſſible evidence of his faithful adherence to truth. The Books of Samuel connect the chain of ſacred hiſtory by detailing the circumſtances of an intereſting period. They deſcribe the reformation and improvements of the Hebrew church eſtabliſhed by David; and as they delineate minutely the life of that monarch, they point out his typical relation to Chriſt; and likewiſe illuſtrate remarkably his inſpired productions, which are contained in the Book of Pſalms. Many heathen authors have borrowed from the books of Samuel, or have collected from other ſources many particulars of thoſe accounts which he gives [N]. This remark will equally apply to the Books of Kings; and, indeed, to all the books of ſacred hiſtory [O].

[N] Eupol. ap. Euſeb. Præp. Lib. IX. Nic. Damaſc. Lib. IV. Hiſt. ap. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. VII. c. vi.

[O] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. VIII. cap. ii. Menand. Theophr. Lib. III. ad Autol. Euſeb. Præp. Lib. X. Clem. Alex. Strom. I.

OF THE

FIRST BOOK OF KINGS.

THIS and the following Book [A] were in the Hebrew canon reckoned but as one. They cannot be poſitively aſſigned to any particular author, though ſome have aſcribed them to Jeremiah [B], and ſome to Iſaiah. There are many, likewiſe, who contend that they are the production of Ezra; and probably this opinion is moſt juſt, for they appear to be a collection, or hiſtorical abridgment, ſelected from the memoirs and books of the prophets; which are herein frequently referred to [C], as records, doubtleſs, of contemporary prophets. Thus "the Book of the Acts of Solomon," is mentioned in this very book [D], and was probably written by Nathan,

[A] The Jews call them the Third and Fourth Book of Kings. In the time of Origen they denominated them from the firſt words "Vammelech David," David the King. Orig. ap Euſeb. Præp. Lib. VI. c. xi.

[B] Bava Bathra, Grotius, Iſidore, Procopius, Kimchi, &c.

[C] Diodor. in 1 Sam. ix. 9. Theodor. Præf. in Lib. Reg. Huet. Propoſ. iv.

[D] Chap. xi. 41.

Ahijah

Ahijah, the Shilonite, and Iddo, the ſeer [E]. And hence thoſe who by the Book of the Acts of Solomon have underſtood the Books of Kings, have ſuppoſed that they were compoſed by theſe prophets [F]; but we elſewhere read that Shemaiah the prophet was employed with Iddo the ſeer, in writing the acts of Rehoboam [G]; that the acts of Abijah were written in the ſtory of Iddo [H]; the book of Jehu the prophet likewiſe related the acts of King Jehoſhaphat [I]; and Iſaiah wrote the acts of Uzziah [K], of Hezekiah [L], and probably of the two intermediate Kings, Jotham and Ahaz, in whoſe reigns he flouriſhed; ſo that we may conclude, that from theſe ſeveral records, as well as from other authentic documents, were compiled the Books of Kings. They appear to have been arranged by one perſon, as the ſtile and manner are uniform; and therefore they may with much probability be aſſigned to Ezra, who poſſibly compiled them during the captivity [M].

The firſt book compriſes a period of 126 years, from the death of David, A. M. 2989, to that of

[E] 2 Chron. ix. 29.

[F] Caijetan, Serrarius, &c.

[G] 2 Chron. xii. 15.

[H] 2 Chron. xiii. 22.

[I] 2 Chron. xx. 34. and 1 Kings xvi. 1.

[K] 2 Chron. xxvi. 22.

[L] 2 Chron. xxxii. 32. and Iſa. xxxvi. xxxvii. xxxviii. and xxxix. where much of Hezekiah's hiſtory is incorporated with Iſaiah's prophecies. Theodor. Præf. in Lib. Reg.

[M] The Chaldaic names by which the months in theſe books are denominated, were not uſed by the Jews till in, or after the captivity.

Jehoſhaphat. After the deſcription of the decay and death of David, we are preſented with a moſt ſtriking hiſtory of the reign of Solomon; of his wiſdom and magnificence; of the building of the temple; of his extended commerce to Ophir [N]; and of the viſit of the Queen of Sheba [O]. To this ſuc-

[N] Various have been the conjectures concerning the ſituation of Ophir. Joſephus places it in the Eaſt-Indies, in a country which, by his deſcription, ſhould appear to be Malacca. Bochart contends that it was Taphrobana, or Ceilon. Calmet places it in Armenia, Montanus in America. And Huetius in the eaſtern coaſt of Africa. As various have been the ſentiments with reſpect to Tharſhiſh, ſome conſidering it as having been near, and others as diſtant from Ophir: all that the ſcriptures tell us, is, that the navy of Tharſhiſh came in once in three years, and furniſhed Solomon immenſe wealth; of which we know not the amount, ſince we can make no exact eſtimate of the value of the talents ſpecified; they were, however, certainly of leſs value than the Moſaic talents. Vid. Prid. Pref. to Con. Bochart. Phaleg. L. II. c. xxvii. Bruce's Travels. Differt. ſur le pays d'Optics. Mem. liter. tom. 30. p. 83.

[O] The moſt learned writers maintain, that the Queen of Sheba came from Yemen, in Arabia Felix She is called by Chriſt, "the Queen of the South," and is ſaid by him to "have come from the utmoſt parts of the earth," as the ſouthern part of Arabia was conſidered by the ancients. She is ſuppoſed to have been a deſcendant of Abraham by Keturah, whoſe grandſon Sheba peopled that country. She therefore probably reſorted to Solomon for religious inſtruction. Vid. 1 Kings x. 1. and hence our Saviour's encomium, Matt. xii. 42. She is called Balkis by the Arabians. The Ethiopians pretend that ſhe was of their country, and many fabulous ſtories are told of her by different writers, under the names of Nicaule, Candace, Marqueda, &c. Vid. Ludolph's Hiſt. of Ethiopia. Dr. Johnſon's Diſc. on Queen of Sheba, vol. xv. Calmet. Dict. under word Nicaule.

ceeds

ceeds an account of the miſerable dotage and apoſtacy of Solomon; and of his death, preceded by a proſpect of that threatened rending of the kingdom which ſhould take place under his ſon [P]. Afterwards are related the acceſſion of Rehoboam; his raſh and impolitic conduct, and the conſequent ſeparation of the ten tribes, which happened about A. M. 3029. This is followed by a conciſe ſketch of the hiſtory of the two kingdoms, in which particular periods are characteriſed by very animated relations; as that of the diſobedient prophet; of the widow of Zarephath; of Elijah and the prophets of Baal; of Benhadad's pride and defeat; of Ahab's injuſtice and puniſhment. In the courſe of theſe events, we contemplate the exact accompliſhment of God's promiſes and threats; the wiſdom of his diſpenſations, and the mingled juſtice and mercies of his government.

The book is ſtamped with the intrinſic marks of inſpiration: of the prophecies which it contains, ſome were ſpeedily completed [Q], but that which foretold

[P] Chap. xi. 11, 12. God is repreſented in ſcripture as ſometimes (eſpecially in caſes of idolatry) "viſiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children," when the meaſure of guilt was completed; and in the foreknowledge that their deſcendants ſhould perſiſt in evil, God revealed as a puniſhment to the diſobedient, thoſe calamities which awaited their families. It was in the power, however, of thoſe who repented, to avert the divine vengeance. Vid. Levit. xxvi. 40—42. 1 Kings xxi. 29.

[Q] Chap. vi. 12. xi. 11—13, 30—39. xiv. 10, 11, 14. xvi. 1—4. Jehu, in this laſt prophecy, foretold that God would make the houſe of Baaſha like that of Jeroboam; and it deſerves

foretold that "Joſiah ſhould be born unto the houſe of David, and ſlay the high-prieſts," was not fulfilled till above 350 years after it was delivered [R]. Some of its prophetic denunciations were uttered under figurative deſcription [S]; and Micaiah, to illuſtrate the infatuation which God had ſuffered to prevail in the counſels of Ahaz, that it might miſlead him to deſtruction; unfolds to the miſguided monarch the danger of his projected enterprize, under a repreſentation received in viſion; in which an imaginary council, and the ſuppoſed agency of a lying ſpirit are introduced, in order to explain the divine conduct in ſome analogous proceedings [T]. Both the books of Kings are cited as authentic and canonical by our Saviour and his Apoſtles [U].

deſerves to be remarked, how exactly the threat was fulfilled; for as Nadab the ſon of Jeroboam reigned two years, ſo did Elah, the ſon of Baaſha; and both were ſlain by the ſword. Vid. xv. 25—28. xvi. 8—10. Vid. alſo, for other predictions, chap. xvii. 1. (compared with James v. 17.) xx. 13. xxi. 19—24. Obſerve, that in the nineteenth verſe of the twenty-firſt chapter, inſtead of *in the place where*, we ſhould read, *in like manner*, as the dogs licked Ahab's blood in Samaria. The prophet points only to the cauſe of Ahab's puniſhment. Vid. Patrick, &c.

[R] Chap. xiii. 1—3. compared with 2 Kings xxiii. 15—20. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. c. v.

[S] Chap. xxii. 17.

[T] Chap. xxii. 19—28. Vid. alſo 2 Kings vi. 17. Job i. 6—12.

[U] Matt. xii. 42. Luke iv. 25—27. Acts vii. 47. Rom. xi. 2—4. James v. 17, 18.

OF THE

SECOND BOOK OF KINGS.

CONCERNING the author of the Second Book of Kings, it has been treated in the preceding preface; and it is here only neceſſary to repeat, that the Second was united with the Firſt Book of Kings in the Hebrew canon, and conſidered but as one with it; and that it was compiled by Ezra, or ſome other inſpired perſon, from the records of former prophets.

THE hiſtory contained in this Book records the government and actions of many ſucceſſive Kings of Judah and Iſrael, for the ſpace of about 300 years: from the death of Jehoſhaphat, A. M. 3115, to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem and the temple, A. M. 3416. The connection and occaſional quarrels which ſubſiſted between the two nations during part of this time, till the conqueſt of Samaria by Shalmanezer, ſeem to have induced the ſacred writer to blend the two hiſtories, as in ſome meaſure treating of the ſame people. Both nations appear to have departed with almoſt equal ſteps from the ſervice of the true God; and in the hiſtory of each we are preſented with

with a ſucceſſion of wicked and idolatrous Kings, till each had completed the meaſure of its iniquity. Both Iſrael and Judah, though they invariably experienced proſperity and affliction in proportion to their obedience or diſobedience, were infatuated by their perverſe inclinations; and in a long ſeries of their reſpective ſovereigns we find a few only who were awakened by God's judgments to a ſenſe of their true intereſt and duty. The whole period ſeems to have been dark and guilty, the glory of the kingdom being eclipſed by the calamities of the diviſion; and by the increaſing miſeries of idolatry and ambition. Succeſſive tyrannies, treaſons, ſeditions, and uſurpations, and the inſtant puniſhment which they produced, ſerve at once to illuſtrate the evil character of the times, and the vigilant equity of the divine government. The events are deſcribed with great ſimplicity, though in themſelves highly intereſting and important. The account of Elijah's aſſumption into heaven; of Eliſha's ſucceſſion to his miniſtry; and of the ſeries of illuſtrious miracles performed by Eliſha; the ſtory of Naaman; and of the panic flight of the Syrians; the hiſtory of Benhadad and Hazael; of the predicted death of Ahab and Jezebel, and their children; and of the deſtruction of Baal's prophets, are all pregnant with inſtruction, and have furniſhed theme for frequent diſſertation. We perceive in theſe impreſſive hiſtories the characters and qualities of men, painted with great fidelity; and the attributes of God diſplayed with great effect. The particulars and circumſtances are ſketched out with a brief

brief and lively deſcription, and the imagination lingers with pleaſure in filling up thoſe ſtriking outlines that are preſented to our view. The ſacred author, regardleſs of minute order, and of the ſucceſſion of events, ſeems ſometimes deſirous only of furniſhing us with a view of the ſtate of religion among the people, and of illuſtrating the genealogy of Chriſt. In particular, we obſerve, how the revolt of the ten tribes and their ſubſequent captivity, contributed to keep up the diſtinction of the tribe of Judah; and to make the prophecies which foretold that the Meſſiah ſhould deſcend from this branch, more conſpicuouſly accompliſhed.

THE predictions deſcribed as delivered and fulfilled in this book, are thoſe which foretold the death of Ahaziah [A]; the birth of a ſon to the Shunammite [B]; the recovery of Naaman [C]; plenty in Samaria [D]; the crimes and cruelty of Hazael [E]; the ſucceſs of Joaſh [F]; the defeat of Sennacherib [G]; the

[A] Chap. i. 16.
[B] Chap. iv. 16.
[C] Chap. v. 10.
[D] Chap. vii. 1.
[E] Chap. viii. 10, 12.
[F] Chap. xiii. 19.
[G] Chap. xix. 6, 7, 28, 29, 33. and Herod. Lib. I. This deſtruction is ſaid in the Babyloniſh Talmud, and in ſome Targums, to have been occaſioned by lightning. It might, perhaps, have been effected by the deſtructive hot winds ſo frequent in thoſe parts. Vid. Thevenot's Travels, Part. II. Book I. chap. xx. B. II. ch. xvi. Part I. Book II. ch. xx. Jeremiah calls this a deſtroying wind, where the Arabic renders it

the prolongation of Hezekiah's life [H]; the Babyloniſh captivity [I]; and the peaceful reign of Joſiah [K].

AFTER the captivity of the ten tribes, the colony brought up from Babylon and other places, adopted the Hebrew religion, and blended it with their own idolatries; and henceforward, in point of time, we hear little of the inhabitants of Samaria. The kingdom of Judah ſtill continued for above a century to provoke God's anger by its diſobedience and idolatry, notwithſtanding Iſaiah and many other prophets conſpired during all this period to exhort the people to repentance, by every motive of intereſt and fear. The good reign of Hezekiah, though lengthened by divine providence, was too ſoon ſucceeded by the "evil days of Manaſſeh," in whoſe time the temple, and even the volume of the law ſeem to have been almoſt entirely neglected. In the reign of Joſiah re-

it an hot peſtilential wind, chap. li. 1. Iſaiah threatens Sennacherib with "a blaſt," which might be called the angel of the Lord. Iſaiah xxxvii. 7. 2 Kings xix. 7.

[H] Chap. xx. 6.

[I] Chap. xx. 17, 18. God appears to have revealed to Hezekiah the calamities which awaited his deſcendants in the Babyloniſh captivity, as a puniſhment for his oſtentatious diſplay of his treaſures, in which he ſeemed to confide; and for not having rather profeſſed his confidence in God, whoſe mercies he had ſo recently experienced. Theſe prophecies, and thoſe in the enſuing chapters relative to the ſame captivity, were literally fulfilled above 100 years after. Vid. chap. xxi. 12—14. xxiii. 27. compared with ch. xxiv. 13. and Dan. i. 1—6.

[K] Chap. xxii. 20.

ligion for a ſhort time revived; the public copy of the law was diſcovered, and read [L], and idolatry for a few months ſuppreſſed; but the tide of iniquity having rolled back with accumulated force, Jeruſalem is beſieged and taken, the city and temple ſpoiled, and the nobleſt of the nation led captive to Babylon. The book concludes with the account of the ſecond ſiege by Nebuchadnezzar, which happened about eighteen years after the firſt; then the city and temple [M] were burnt, and ſoon after the whole deſtruction completed by the maſſacre, or flight of the remnant which had been left amidſt the ruined cities of Judæa.

[L] Chap. xxii. 8. xxiii. 2.

[M] According to Uſher's computation, the temple was burnt about 424 years after it was built. Joſephus, who conceives it to have been burnt 470 years, 6 months, and 10 days from the time of its building, obſerves with aſtoniſhment, that the ſecond temple was burnt by the Romans in the ſame month, and on the ſame day of the month that the firſt temple was ſet on fire by the Chaldæans; and the Jewiſh doctors add, with as little truth, that the Levites were ſinging the ſame hymn in both deſtructions, repeating from Pſal. xciv. 23. theſe words: "He ſhall bring upon them their own iniquity, and he ſhall cut them off in their own wickedneſs, yea, the Lord our God ſhall cut them off." Vid. Antiq. Lib. X. c. xi.

OF THE

FIRST BOOK OF CHRONICLES.

THE Jews formerly reckoned the two Books of Chronicles but as one [A]; which was entitled the Book of Diaries [B], or Journals, in alluſion to thoſe ancient journals which appear to have been kept among the Jews. The Books of Chronicles, indeed, as well as thoſe of Kings, were in all probability copied, as to many of their hiſtorical relations, from theſe ancient chronicles of the Kings of Iſrael and Judah. Such chronicles muſt unqueſtionably have exiſted, ſince in the books of Kings there are frequent references to books of Chronicles, as containing circumſtances which are not found in thoſe ſo entitled in our canon, not to mention that

[A] They now adopt our diviſion, as well as in the preceding books, in conformity to our mode of citation in concordances, of which they borrowed the uſe from the Latin church.

[B] דברי הימים, dibrë hajjamim, Verba dierum, that is, The words of days; extracts from diaries. They are called Chronicles from the Greek word χρονικα.

theſe

theſe were written after the books of Kings. The books of Chronicles which we now poſſeſs, were ſo named by St. Jerom: they are diſtinguiſhed in the Septuagint as the books of "things omitted [c];" and they are ſuppoſed to have been deſigned as a kind of ſupplement to the preceding books of ſcripture; to ſupply ſuch important particulars as had been omitted, becauſe inconſiſtent with the plan of former books. They are generally, and with much probability, attributed to Ezra [d]; who has uſed a ſimilar ſtile of expreſſion, and whoſe book appears to be a continuation of them [e]. Ezra, if he were the author, might have digeſted them by the aſſiſtance of Haggai and Nehemiah; as well from hiſtorical records, as from the accounts of contemporary prophets.

These books were certainly compiled after the

[c] Παραλειπομενων. Thus Xenophon wrote the paralipomena of the Peloponneſian war, as a ſupplement to the hiſtory of Thucydides.

[d] This book appears to have been compiled before that of Nehemiah, by whom it is cited (Neh. xii. 23.), though the genealogy of the deſcendants of Zerubbabel is ſaid to be brought down much below the time of Ezra; for if the Zerubbabel here mentioned were the ſame who conducted the people back from the captivity, the account may have been ſwelled by collateral kindred; or poſſibly encreaſed by a ſubſequent addition. St. Matthew, however, gives, in his firſt chapter, a genealogy ſo different, that it appears to be that of a different branch, if not of a different family. Comp. 1 Chron. iii. 19. et ſeq. with Matth. i. 13. et ſeq. and Grot. in Matt. i. 23.

[e] Comp. the laſt verſes of 2 Chron. with beginning of Ezra. Patrick's Comm. in 2 Chron. xxix. 21.

captivity, as they mention the reſtoration by Cyrus, and ſome circumſtances that occurred after the return [F]. The author, however, appears ſometimes to ſpeak as one who lived previous to the captivity [G]; but this muſt have been in conſequence of his tranſcribing, without alteration, the accounts of earlier writers.

THE books of Chronicles, though they contain many particulars related in preceding books; and ſupply ſeveral circumſtances omitted in preceding accounts; are not to be conſidered merely as an abridgment of former hiſtories, with ſome ſupplementary additions; but as books written with a particular view; in conſiſtency with which, the author ſometimes diſregards important particulars in thoſe accounts from which he might have compiled his work; and adheres to the deſign propoſed, which ſeems to have been to furniſh a genealogical ſketch of the twelve tribes, deduced from the earlieſt times: in order to point out thoſe diſtinctions which were neceſſary to diſcriminate the mixed multitude that returned from Babylon; to aſcertain the lineage of Judah; and to re-eſtabliſh, on their ancient footing, the pretenſions and functions of each individual tribe. The author appears to have intended to furniſh, at the ſame time, an epitome of ſome parts of the Jewiſh hiſtory; and in this firſt book, taking up the account at the death of Saul, he preſents his country-

[F] 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21—23. xxxv. 25.

[G] 1 Chron. iii. 19. iv. 41—43. 2 Chron. v. 9. xxi. 20. xxii. 26. xxv. 25.

men

men with the picture of David's reign; especially dilates on his zeal for religion; and on the preparations which he made for the building of the temple; probably with design to excite the reverence and emulation of those who were about to rebuild it. He describes particularly the regulations and arrangements adopted by David with relation to the Priests and Levites; as well as to the appointment of the musicians and other persons employed in the service of the temple, which David established on a great and magnificent scale: improving it with the introduction of hymns, of which there is a fine specimen in the sixteenth chapter of this book.

The author, in repeating some particulars related in the preceding books, specified the names of the persons employed, and active on great occasions; and by this means furnished each individual tribe with an account of the actions of its respective ancestors.

The genealogical tables of this book must have been highly important among the Jews, who were led by the prophetic promises to be extremely observant of these particulars. They exhibit the detail of the sacred line through which the promise of the Messiah was transmitted [H]. The precedency of the several

[H] The genealogies contained in this book are carried back without interruption to Adam, through a period of nearly 3500 years. They furnish a striking proof of the solicitude which prevailed among the Jews to ascertain the completion of the promises; as also of the vigilant care with which the sacred accounts were preserved. They could not be corrupted formerly, for most of the people could repeat them *memoriter*. The veneration for them was condemned by St. Paul as excessive and useless, after the appearance of the Messiah. 1 Tim. i. 4. Tit. iii. 9.

families, likewiſe; their marriages; and many advantages, were often dependant on the accuracy of theſe accounts; and thoſe, who could not prove their deſcent, were deprived of many privileges. A regular and unpolluted lineage was eſpecially neceſſary to thoſe who aſpired to the prieſthood; and ſuch as could not produce it were deemed incapable of admiſſion to that high office [I]. Ezra, likewiſe, by pointing out the diviſion of families, as recognized before the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, enabled each tribe, at the return from the captivity, to be reſtored to its appropriate inheritance. Theſe genealogical accounts are likewiſe ſtill uſeful in many reſpects [K]; and, however they may appear ſometimes irreconcileable with modern ſyſtems of chronology, they were certainly conſidered as accurate by the evangelical writers, as they are cited in the New Teſtament [L].

THE authority of the book is likewiſe eſtabliſhed by the accommodation of a prophetic paſſage ſelected from it to the character of our Saviour by St. Paul [M]; and by a poſitive prophecy of the eternity of

[I] Ezra ii. 61, 62. Selden de Succeſs. ad Pontif. Lib. II. cap. ii. p. 213. and cap. iii. p. 215. Joſeph. cont. Apion, Lib. I. Maimon. in Miſhnah Biath. c. vi. ſect. 11.

[K] We collect from them, among other things, that Nathan, from whom, according to St. Luke, our Saviour was deſcended, was the ſon of David by Bathſhua, or Bathſheba, 1 Chron. iii. 5.

[L] Matth. i. Luke iii. Joſeph. cont. Apion, Lib. I. Grotius Annot. in Lib. Carpzov. p. 292. Huet. Demonſtrat. Evang. Prop. IV. Walton Officin. Bib. p. 555. Lightfoot Chron. Vet. Teſt. p. 142.

[M] 1 Chron. xvii. 13. xxii. 10. Heb. i. 5.

Chriſt's

Chriſt's kingdom [N]; as well as by other occaſional predictions [O]. It may be added alſo, as remarkable, that an inſpired acclamation of David to the praiſe of God in this book, breathes the ſame ſentiments of piety which were afterwards uttered in ſimilar expreſſions by our Saviour, and which by St. John, in his enraptured viſions, are aſcribed to the bleſſed ſpirits who celebrate the praiſes of God in heaven [P].

[N] 1 Chron. xvii. 14.

[O] Chap. xxii. 9, 10.

[P] Compare 1 Chron. xxix. 10, 11. with Matth. vi. 13. and with Rev. v. 12, 13.

OF

OF THE

SECOND BOOK OF CHRONICLES.

THIS Book, as well as the former, with which it was orignally united, was probably collected by Ezra, from the writings of the different prophets who are ſeverally mentioned in ſcripture as the hiſtorians of their reſpective periods [A]; as well as poſſibly from ancient chronicles which are ſuppoſed to have exiſted, and which may be conceived to have been compoſed by the Prieſts, ſome of whom are called memorialiſts, or recorders, as Jehoſhaphat [B] and Joah the ſon of Aſaph [C]. The book contains many things omitted in the hiſtorical books which precede. It begins with a deſcription of the reign of Solomon; and dilates with particular exactneſs on the munificent piety of that monarch, in the conſtruction of the temple; minutely ſpecifying its

[A] 1 Chron. xxix. 29. 2 Chron. ix. 29. xii. 15. xiii. 32. xx. 34. xxvi. 22. xxxii. 32. xxxiii. 19. xxxv. 5.

[B] 2 Sam. viii. 16.

[C] 2 Kings xviii. 18.

ornaments

ornaments as typical of ſpiritual decorations which were to embelliſh the Chriſtian church; a ſubject highly intereſting and uſeful to the Jews, who at the time when this book was written, were preparing to rebuild the temple. Hence the account of the ſolemn conſecration of the firſt building; of the noble and comprehenſive prayer of Solomon; and of the covenanted promiſes which God graciouſly imparted at the dedication, muſt have furniſhed much conſolation to the Jews, ſcarce yet reviving from the deſpondence of captives. Then is repeated from the book of Kings, the repreſentation of the magnificence and proſperity which Solomon enjoyed, agreeably to God's promiſe [D].

After this we are furniſhed with a recapitulation of the hiſtory of the Kings of Judah, occaſionally intermixed with relations reſpecting Iſrael, when connected with Judah. Great part of this hiſtory is ſelected either immediately from the book of Kings, or both Kings and Chronicles were copied from ſome larger annals, known under the title of the books of Kings; ſince frequent references are herein made to ſome books of Kings, and ſometimes for circumſtances not extant in the canonical books [E]. Theſe accounts, however, in the books of Chronicles, are enriched with many additional particulars. They preſent us with a lively picture of the ſtate of the

[D] Chap. i. 11, 12.

[E] Chap. xvi. 11. xxi. xxiv. 27. xxv. 26. xxviii. 26. xxxii. 32. xxxiii. 18. xxxv. 27.

kingdom of Judah; and of the various viciſſitudes and revolutions which it ſuſtained under different princes. They ſerve, as the author ſeems to have deſigned, greatly to illuſtrate the neceſſity of depending on God for defence, without whoſe protection kingdoms muſt fall. The advantage derived from obedience to God, and the miſeries that reſulted from wickedneſs and ſin, are ſtrikingly ſhewn. The book abounds with uſeful examples; and the characters are forcibly diſplayed by a contraſted ſucceſſion of pious and depraved princes. The change and defection even of individual perſons, and their decline from righteouſneſs to evil, is ſhewn with much effect. The rebellion of Iſrael, and the conteſt between the two kingdoms; the preſervation of Joaſh from the deſtruction which overwhelmed the reſt of the houſe of Judah; the ſtruggles between idolatry and true religion; the opportune diſcovery of the copy of the law; with many other intereſting particulars which exhibit the interpoſition of the Almighty, defeating evil, and effecting his concerted purpoſes, deſerve to be conſidered with great attention.

Several predictions are ſcattered through the book: as the promiſes made to Solomon [F]; to Jehoſhaphat [G]; and to others [H]. Some ſentiments appear to be tranſcribed from it into the New Teſtament [I].

[F] Chap. i. 12. vii. 17—22.

[G] Chap. xix. 2. xx. 15, 17, 37.

[H] Chap. xxxiii. 8.

[I] Comp. 2 Chron. ii. 5, 6. with Acts vii. 48, 49. and xvii. 24; alſo 2 Chron. xix. 7. with 1 Pet. i. 17.

The

THE varieties and apparent differences which exiſt between theſe books and thoſe of Kings, with reſpect to numbers, names, and dates, have deterred the Hebrew writers from commenting on them. Theſe, however, are to be attributed to thoſe various cauſes which have been before detailed [K]; to our ignorance of periods ſo long elapſed; to the different ſcope of the ſacred writers; and to thoſe mutilations and corruptions in minute particulars which have eſpecially prevailed in the books of Chronicles; for theſe appear to have been copied with unuſual careleſſneſs; and in none is the punctuation ſo defective.

THE ſecond book contains a brief ſketch of the ſacred hiſtory, from the acceſſion of Solomon to the throne, A. M. 2988, to the return from the captivity, A. M. 3468: a recapitulation not only very uſeful to the Jews, but which reflects great light on other parts of ſcripture, and exhibits ſome coincidence with prophane accounts [L].

THE two books jointly conſidered, furniſh in a connected view, a compendium of the Jewiſh hiſtory. In almoſt all the Hebrew manuſcripts, they are placed as the concluſion of the bible. In moſt of the verſions, as in our tranſlation, they immediately ſucceed the Books of Kings, and precede the Book of Ezra. This appears to be the proper and original

[K] Introduction and Preface to Hiſtorical Books.

[L] Hieron. Epiſt. IX. ad Paulin. & Epiſt. ad Domnion. St. Jerom juſtly remarks, that it were folly to pretend to a knowledge of ſcripture without an acquaintance with the Book of Chronicles.

order,

order, and is ſupported by the Cambridge manuſcript. Dr. Kennicott ſuppoſes, that the two laſt verſes of the Second Book of Chronicles were improperly added to it by a tranſcriber, who careleſsly wrote down the beginning of Ezra; and on diſcovering his miſtake, broke off abruptly, and beginning Ezra again, repeated the verſes with proper diſtinction of place [M].

[M] See Kennicott Diſſert. on 1 Chron. xi. 1. p. 491.

OF THE

BOOK OF EZRA.

THIS Book was certainly written by Ezra. That he wrote the four laſt chapters has never been queſtioned, ſince, in ſeveral parts of theſe, he evidently profeſſes himſelf the author, by ſpeaking in the firſt perſon [A]. Some critics, indeed, have pretended that the ſix firſt chapters muſt have been written by a perſon more ancient than Ezra, becauſe Ezra is ſaid in the ſeventh chapter [B], to have gone up from Babylon after the events deſcribed in the ſix firſt chapters, in the time of Artaxerxes Longimanus; whereas in the fifth chapter, the author has been thought to ſpeak of himſelf as preſent at Jeruſalem, in the time of Darius Hyſtaſpes [C]: if this be not a miſtake, Ezra may perhaps be ſuppoſed to have

[A] Chap. vii. 27, 28. viii. 1, 15, 24. ix. 5.

[B] Chap. vii. 1.

[C] Chap. v. 4. This verſe is uſually conſidered as an anſwer of the Jews. It may poſſibly, however, be conſidered as a queſtion of Tatnai and his companions. See verſe 10. Perhaps we ſhould read as in the Greek, Syriac, and Arabic verſions, "then ſaid they," and the objection is removed, and the ſenſe amended.

accompanied

accompanied Zerubbabel in the firſt return from the captivity [D]; and might have been again ſent up to Babylon to counteract the repreſentations of thoſe who oppoſed at the Perſian court the rebuilding of the city and temple; and the account of his departure, which is given in the ſeventh chapter, perhaps refers only to his going up with that commiſſion and power which he received from Artaxerxes. But whether Ezra were or were not at Jeruſalem at the time when this anſwer is ſuppoſed to have been made to Tatnai, he may well be conceived, either as copying a public record of the tranſaction, or as relating a ſpeech of the Jews, to have uſed the expreſſion of "We ſaid unto them," meaning by "we," his countrymen; which is ſurely no uncommon mode of ſpeaking. Such objections are very futile: and there is no reaſon to queſtion the authenticity of any part of the book, which from the higheſt antiquity has been attributed to Ezra; who certainly at leaſt digeſted it; and probably towards the end of his days [E].

This book is written with all the ſpirit and fidelity that could be diſplayed by a writer of contemporary events. It is a continuation of the Jewiſh hiſtory, from the time at which the Chronicles conclude; and

[D] Nehem. xii. 1. If the author of this book were not the ſame perſon with the Ezra, mentioned by Nehemiah, he might ſtill have gone up from Babylon to Jeruſalem before the ſeventh year of Artaxerxes.

[E] Huet. Demon. Evang. Carpzov. Introd. in Lib. Hiſt. V. Teſt. Brentii Præf. Colouii Bibl. Illuſt. in Lib. Eſd. Walteri Officin. Biblic. p. 559.

the

the connection of the two accounts is evident, ſince the book of Ezra begins with a repetition of the two verſes which terminate the books of Chronicles. The ſacred writers paſs over the time of the captivity as a ſad period of affliction and puniſhment: during which, if the people were indulged in the exerciſe of their religion, they had few hiſtorical events to record; and therefore we have no general hiſtory of their circumſtances: and muſt have recourſe to the books of thoſe illuſtrious prophets who flouriſhed among them in Aſſyria, for the only particulars that can be obtained concerning their condition.

The preſent book begins with an account of God's having diſpoſed Cyrus, either by poſitive injunction, or by diſcovering to him his long-predicted deſigns, to promote the rebuilding of the city and temple of Jeruſalem. It relates the accompliſhment of ſome illuſtrious prophecies in the releaſe [F] which that monarch granted in the firſt year of his reign over Babylon; and in the return of the Jews [G] to their own country after a captivity of ſeventy years [H], A. M.

[F] Iſaiah xliv. 26—28. A prophecy uttered concerning Cyrus, deſcribed by name near 200 years before he appeared: juſtly noticed with admiration by heathen writers.

[G] Scaliger Iſag. Lib. III. p. 260. & de Emend. Temp. Lib. VI. p. 576.

[H] The name of Jews ſeems firſt to have been applied to this people after the return from the captivity. Joſeph. Antiq. XI. c. v. The Jews returned from Babylon fifty years after the taking of Jeruſalem; but the ſeventy years which Jeremiah predicted as the period for the duration of the captivity, are

A. M. 3468. We then are preſented with a liſt of the leaders and numbers of the captives who returned under Zerubbabel, and perceive how fatally the nation had been diminiſhed and brought low by ſucceſſive defeats and diſperſions [I]. We contemplate the picture of an haraſſed people reſtored from captivity, and returning to their country, which had long lain deſolate [K]. We behold them erecting a temporary altar and ſervice, and laying the foundation of their temple. Afterwards are deſcribed the lamentations of thoſe who remembered the magnificence of Solomon's building; the oppoſition excited by the Samaritans and others, whoſe aſſiſtance had been rejected; the interruption occaſioned by their in-

are reckoned from the third or fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, A. M. 3398. Vid. Jer. xxv. 1, 11. xxix. 10. when Nebuchadnezzar firſt invaded Judæa, and carried off captives. Dan. i. 1, 3. 2 Kings xxiv. 1. Patrick in Jerem. xxv. 11. xxix. 10. Dan. i. 1. Zech. i. 12. vii. 1—5. and Prid. Ant. A. C. 518.

[I] Many of the Jews remained in the countries into which they had been carried. The Jewiſh writers ſay, that only the dregs of the people returned. It ſhould be remarked, that Ezra ſays, that "the whole congregation together was 42,360;" though if we calculate the ſeparate numbers, they amount but to 29,818. Ezra, perhaps, omits the detail of ſome individuals, collectively reckoned: as thoſe of the ten tribes, or thoſe who could not find their regiſter; or poſſibly the numbers are in ſome inſtances corrupted.

[K] As the land had lain deſolate only fifty-two years from the death of Gedaliah, Prideaux ſuppoſes that the Jews had neglected the law concerning the ſabbatical year, only from the beginning of the reign of Aſa; that is, 364 years. Vid. Preface to Leviticus, p. 109, note G.

trigues;

trigues; and at laſt, the finiſhing and dedication of the temple, about A. M. 3489 [L], and the celebration of the Paſſover [M]. Ezra then relates his return with his companions to Jeruſalem; confeſſes the diſobedience of the people to God's laws, in intermarrying with the Gentile nations of the land; deſcribes his own pious and conciliatory prayer; the repentance of the people, and their ſeparation from the wives and children, who not being of the holy ſeed, might, if ſuffered to intermingle with the Jews, have rendered uncertain the accompliſhment of the promiſes; and he concludes with an enumeration of thoſe who had tranſgreſſed: ſtigmatizing, with impartial indignation, the names of even the prieſts and

[L] The Jews tell our Saviour, that their temple had been forty-ſix years in building; which muſt mean the temple as repaired and enlarged by Herod. This work was begun in the eighteenth year of his reign; from whence to the thirtieth year of Chriſt was a period of forty-ſix years; and the temple was not even then entirely finiſhed; nor according to the account of Joſephus till the time of Agrippa, near ſixty years after the death of Chriſt. Vid. John ii. 20. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XV. c. xiv. Lib. XX. c. viii.

[M] It is neceſſary here to mention, that Juſtin Martyr in his dialogue with Trypho, aſſerts that the following ſpeech of Ezra was in the ancient Hebrew copies of the Bible, but expunged by the Jews, viz. "Ezra ſaid to the people, this paſſover is our Saviour, and our refuge; and if you will be perſuaded of it, and let it into your hearts, that we are to humble him in a ſign, and afterwards ſhall believe in him, this place ſhall not be deſtroyed for ever, ſaith the God of hoſts; but if you will not believe in him, neither hearken to his preaching, ye ſhall be a laughing-ſtock to the Gentiles.

rulers who had offended in this important violation of the law.

THE hiſtory contains a period of about ſeventy-nine years: from A. M. 3468, when Cyrus became maſter of Perſia, to A. M. 3547, when Ezra effected the reform deſcribed in the laſt chapter of his book; for between the dedication of the temple, and the departure of Ezra from Babylon in the ſeventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, is a period of fifty-ſeven or fifty-eight years; which this book paſſes over in ſilence, only mentioning that the Jews had during that time intermixed with the Gentiles.

THIS book is written in Chaldee [N] from the eighth verſe of the fourth chapter to the nineteenth verſe of the ſixth chapter, and from the beginning of the ſeventh chapter to the twenty-ſeventh verſe; for as this part of the work contains chiefly letters, converſation, and decrees uttered in that language; it was conſiſtent with the fidelity of the ſacred hiſtorian, to deſcribe the very words which were uſed; eſpecially, as the people recently returned from the captivity were familiar, and perhaps more converſant with the Chaldee, than even with the Hebrew tongue; and it was probably about this time that the Chaldee paraphraſes began to be uſed; for it appears by Nehemiah's account [O], that all could not underſtand the law, which may mean that ſome of them had forgotten the Hebrew during their diſperſion in the cap-

[N] The Chaldee or Syriac, was the language then uſed over all Aſſyria, Babylonia, Perſia, &c.

[O] Neh. viii. 2, 8. Caſaubon Epiſt. 590.

tivity.

tivity [P]. Some aſſign, likewiſe, to this time, the origin of the Jewiſh ſynagogues, though it is poſſible that they exiſted before the captivity [Q].

Ezra was of the ſacerdotal family, a deſcendant of Seraiah [R], in a right line from Aaron. He ſucceeded Zerubbabel in the government of Judæa, by a commiſſion which laſted twelve years, to A. M. 3558; at the expiration of which term, he either returned to Babylon to give an account of the ſtate of the province of Judæa; or elſe retired into a private ſtation in his own country; co-operating, doubtleſs, in the pious deſigns of Nehemiah his ſucceſſor, by whom he is related ſoon after to have produced and read the law of Moſes to the people. Ezra, indeed, appears to have been particularly well ſkilled in the law, to have given much attention to the ſtudy of the ſcriptures, and to have been well verſed in the interpretation of them. He ſtiles himſelf a ready ſcribe [S], and profeſſes to have prepared himſelf to inſtruct

[P] Univ. Hiſt. vol. x. Book II. p. 220.

[Q] Pſalm lxxiv. 7, 8.

[R] Chap. vii. 1—5. He calls himſelf the ſon of Seraiah, which only implies his deſcendant; or at leaſt, it is not probable that he was the immediate ſon of the high-prieſt Seraiah, who was ſlain at the taking of Jeruſalem. 2 Kings xxv. 18. Prid. Con. Part I. B. V.

[S] Ezra vii. 6. The word, סֹפֵר, ſopher, implies one ſkilful in the interpretation of ſcripture. The origin of the ſcribes is uncertain; they were probably firſt employed in ſubſerviency to the prophets, and, perhaps, educated in their ſchools. Judges v. 14. 1 Chron. xxvii. 32. Jerem. xxxvi. 26. They ſeem to have been eſtabliſhed as an order of men after the

inſtruct the people in the ſtatutes of God: the tradition, therefore, of his having made a collection of the ſacred writings is extremely probable. We know, indeed, from Joſephus, that the Jewiſh prieſts after every important war, were accuſtomed on the eſtabliſhment of peace, both at home and abroad, publicly to aſcertain, recognize, and copy out the regiſters of the prieſthood [T]; by which we muſt either underſtand the ſcriptures, or believe that the ſame practice prevailed as to them.

EZRA, therefore, may well be ſuppoſed to have publiſhed a correct edition, after the re-eſtabliſhment of the Jews; and probably with the aſſiſtance of the great ſynagogue [U], which particularly flouriſhed in the time of Artaxerxes Longimanus; not that there is any reaſon to imagine that the ſacred books were loſt during the captivity; as ſome have abſurdly conceived, from the fabulous relation of a pretended

captivity, and to have riſen into repute after the ceſſation of prophecy. They are mentioned in the New Teſtament as doctors of the law, and teachers of the people. Matt. xxii. 35. and Mark xii. 28, &c. They appear in later times to have corrupted the law by their traditions, and to have become deficient in purity of manners. Matt. xv. 3. v. 20. Luke xx. 46. Of the inſpired ſcribes, of whom Simon ſpeaks, there is no account in ſcripture.

[T] Οι παραλειπομενοι των ιερων καινα παλιν εκ των αρχαιων γραμμαλων ζυνιςανται, are the words of Joſephus, Lib. I. cont. Apion.

[U] Irenæus. adv. Hæres, Lib. III. c. xxv. Tertul. de Habit. Mulier. c. iii. Clem. Alex. Strom. I. Baſil. Epiſt. ad Chilon, &c. Chryſoſt. Homil. in Epiſt. ad Hebræ. Herbelot Biblioth. Orient. ſub Voce Ozair. Ben. Seraiah & Koran. cap. Bacra. Introd. p. 6.

burning

burning of the law, and of the reſtoration of the ſcriptures by divine revelation, which account is given only in the apocryphal book of Eſdras [x]: a work of little or no authority. The copies of the law were too much reverenced to be loſt; and Daniel [y] we know was in poſſeſſion of one during the captivity. He likewiſe quotes the prophecies of Jeremiah [z]; and probably other perſons had copies of the ſcriptures, many of them being favoured by the conquerors; and if the ſacred veſſels of the temple were ſo carefully preſerved, we may well conceive that the authentic manuſcripts of the Hebrew ſcriptures were ſafely depoſited at Babylon; and perhaps reſtored to Zerubbabel, or Ezra, on their return to Jeruſalem. But wherever preſerved, Ezra certainly produced the Law, and read it to the people [a]; and the other books of ſcripture were collected by him and Nehemiah [b], or by the great ſynagogue.

Ezra was a moſt uſeful perſon to the Jews, who reverence his memory with a regard almoſt equal to that which they entertain for Moſes. He is not particularly ſtiled a prophet in ſcripture; but our Saviour makes no diſtinction between the authors of the ſacred books, except that of "Moſes and the Prophets." Ezra was undoubtedly an appointed miniſter of God; and he wrote under the influence of the Holy Spirit,

[x] 2 Eſdras xiv. 21.
[y] Chap. ix. 11, 13.
[z] Dan. ix. 2.
[a] Nehem. viii. 2. and ancient Univ. Hiſt. vol. iii. p. 418.
[b] 2 Macc. ii. 13.

or his book would not have been admitted into the Hebrew canon; or received as ſacred from the earlieſt ages of the chriſtian church.

EZRA is reported by ſome traditionary accounts to have died in the hundred and twentieth year of his age, and to have been buried at Jeruſalem [c]; though others ſay that he died in Perſia, and was buried on the banks of the river Samura; where his tomb is ſhewn [D]. Beſides the books which are aſcribed to Ezra in the apocryphal part of our Bible, there have been ſpurious conſtitutions; benedictions; and prayers attributed to him; as likewiſe a revelation; a dream; and a prophecy relative to the Roman empire; together with a calendar of pretended auſpicious and unlucky days, none of which require attention.

[c] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XI. c. v.
[D] Benjamin Tudela.

OF

OF THE

BOOK OF NEHEMIAH.

THE Book of Nehemiah being ſubjoined in the Hebrew canon to that of Ezra as a continuation of his hiſtory, was often conſidered as his work [A]: and in the Latin and Greek Bibles it is called the Second Book of Ezra; but it undoubtedly was written by Nehemiah, for he profeſſes himſelf the author of it in the beginning, and uniformly ſpeaks in the firſt perſon. It was probably admitted into the catalogue of the ſacred writings by ſome of the great ſynagogue [B].

EZRA appears to have continued near ten years in the government of Judæa, after the reform which he mentions in the laſt chapter of his Book: perſiſting probably in his endeavours to reſtore religion, and to

[A] Hieron. Præf. in Reg. Euſeb. Chron. ad An. 1584.

[B] When Iſidore aſſerted, that the ſecond book of Ezra was not in the Hebrew canon, he meant the apocryphal book attributed to him; for he ſays, that Ezra's firſt book contained the words of Ezra and Nehemiah. Iſidor. Orig. Lib. VI. c. ii.

promote the profperity of his country. Circumftances were, however, fo unfavourable and adverfe to his defigns, that in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes Longimanus [c], A. M. 3559, we find, from Nehemiah, that repreſentations were made to him at Babylon of the afflicted ſtate of the Jews; and of the ruinous condition of their city, of which the walls were yet unrepaired.

This book begins with an account of Nehemiah's grief at this report; of his application to Artaxerxes for permiſſion to viſit and rebuild Jeruſalem, "the place of his fathers ſepulchres." This he obtained, probably by the entreaty of Eſther, the Queen [d], who favoured the Jews. Nehemiah then relates his departure and arrival at Jeruſalem with authority; feelingly deſcribes the deſolate ſtate of Jeruſalem, and his exertions to repair its diſmantled walls. He records the names of thoſe patriotic men who aſſiſted him on this occaſion; the conſpiracy of the Ammonites, and other enemies, againſt the work, and the defeat of their defigns. After the finiſhing of the walls and fortifications, Nehemiah applied himſelf to other public objects. The ſcarcity of the inhabitants in the large city of Jeruſalem firſt excited his attention. He fortunately at this time found a regiſter

[c] Not Artaxerxes Mnemon, as ſome have imagined. Vid. Scalig. Proleg. Oper. de Emend. Temp. Lib. VI. & Patrick. The month Chiſleu, mentioned in the firſt verſe of Nehemiah, anſwers to a part of our November and December.

[d] Chap. ii. 6.

of

of thoſe perſons who returned from the captivity under Zerubbabel: which he repeats in the ſeventh chapter [E]: in order to complete the reſtoration of their poſſeſſions to the reſpective tribes; and that none but the Levites and deſcendants of Aaron might officiate in the ſervice of the temple and of the prieſthood.

Nehemiah then deſcribes the public reading of the Law to the people; the celebration of the Feaſt of the Tabernacles [F]; and other religious appointments,

[E] Chap. vii. This genealogy differs from that given by Ezra in the ſecond chapter of his book, with reſpect to names and numbers; which difference Prideaux attributes to alterations made by Nehemiah, in compliance with changes that had happened ſince the departure from Babylon. It is remarkable that the two accounts agree in the total amount; and the ſum of the numbers which are ſeparately detailed, will correſpond, if to the 29,818 ſpecified by Ezra, we add the 1765 perſons reckoned by Nehemiah, which Ezra has omitted; and, on the other hand, to the 31,089 enumerated by Nehemiah, add the 494 which is an overplus in Ezra's book, not noticed by Nehemiah: both writers including in the ſum total 10,777 of the mixed multitude, which is not particularized in the individual detail. The accounts unqueſtionably agreed when they were received into the canon, unleſs where there might be ſome cauſe for a variation; and probably the differences that now exiſt, have originated in the careleſſneſs of the copyiſts. Vid. Commentators.

[F] The Scenopegia, or feaſt of Tabernacles, was a grand feſtival in memory of the Iſraelites having dwelt in tents in the wilderneſs. It began the 15th of September, and was celebrated for eight days with great joy. The obſervance of it

ments, obſerved with a pathetic commemoration and thankſgiving for God's former mercies, as deſcribed in preceding books of ſcripture. Then follows an account of the renewal of the covenant of obedience and reſpect to God's law, recorded as a memorial, with the names of thoſe who ſigned it; a catalogue of thoſe who were appointed by lot, or conſented to live at Jeruſalem, which was ſurrounded by hoſtile neighbours; and the book concludes with a deſcription of the reformation, both civil and religious, which Nehemiah effected; the laſt act of which, the removal of the ſtrange wives, was, according to the general computation, accompliſhed about A. M. 3574 [G]; but which could not have happened, as Prideaux has on very ſufficient grounds determined, till A. M. 3595 [H]; at which time he ſuppoſes the firſt period of Daniel's prophecy to conclude [I], and the ſcripture hiſtory to cloſe.

NEHEMIAH

ſeems to have been much inſiſted on by the prophets; and as it argued a ſenſe of God's former mercies, it ſeems to have been attended with a bleſſing. Vid. Zech. xiv. 16, 17.

[G] Blair's Chronol.

[H] The laſt act of Nehemiah's reformation took place under the pontificate of Joiada; (for the original of chap. xiii. 28. will not admit a conſtruction which ſhould repreſent Eliaſhib as the high-prieſt), and Joiada ſucceeded to the prieſthood, A. M. 3591.

[I] Prideaux dates the period of the ſeven weeks from the ſeventh year of Artaxerxes, An. A. C. 458; when Ezra was commiſſioned by a decree to rebuild the temple, and to reſtore Jeruſalem; from that time, to the reformation effected by Nehemiah,

NEHEMIAH was the ſon of Hachaliah; and according to tradition, of the tribe of Judah [K], though it had been fanſied, from an apocryphal account of his offering ſacrifices at the head of the prieſts, that he was of the tribe of Levi [L]. He appears to have been a different perſon from the Nehemiah mentioned by Ezra [M], and in this book, as one who returned from the captivity with Zerubbabel; ſince from the firſt year of Cyrus to the twentieth of Artaxerxes Longimanus, no fewer than ninety-one years intervene; ſo that Nehemiah muſt, on the ſuppoſition that they were the ſame perſons, have been at this time much above an hundred years old; at which age it can hardly be thought [N] probable, that he ſhould have taken a journey from Shuſhan to Jeruſalem; and have been capable during a government of twelve years, and afterwards, of all thoſe active exertions, which in this book he is deſcribed to have made. Nehemiah, however, the author of this book, appears to have been born at Babylon; and was ſo diſtinguiſhed for his family and

hemiah, were forty-nine years, when the Church and State were re-eſtabliſhed; or, according to the figurative deſcription of Daniel, when "the ſtreet and the walls were rebuilt in troublous times." Vid. Dan. ix. 25. Prid. Con. An. Ant. C. 409.

[K] R. Abarb. in Cabal. Euſeb. Chron. Can. A. 1584. Iſidore, Geneb, &c.

[L] 2 Macc. i. 18. and following verſes.

[M] Ezra ii. 1. Nehem. vii. 7.

[N] Michael. Praef. in Nehem.

qualities,

qualities, as to be ſelected for the office of cup-bearer to the King: a ſituation of great honour and emolument in the Perſian court. He was likewiſe diſtinguiſhed by the title of Terſhata, which was in general appropriated to the King's deputies and governors [o]. By his privilege of daily attendance on the King, he had conſtant opportunities of conciliating his favour; and was enabled by the royal bounty to ſupport his government with great magnificence at his own private charge, and generouſly to relieve his people from the burden of that expence which they had neceſſarily ſuſtained under preceding governors [p]. In every other reſpect, likewiſe, he diſplayed the moſt exemplary and diſintereſted zeal for the proſperity of his country [q]. If Nehemiah were not abſolutely a prophet, he profeſſes himſelf to have acted under the authority and guidance of God [r]. He ſeems to have conſpired with Ezra in all his pious deſigns; and probably aſſiſted him in the reviſal of the canon [s]. The Jews report him to have been one of the great ſynagogue. The author of the ſecond Book of Maccabees attributes to him writings which are now no longer extant [t], if they ever exiſted.

[o] Neh. ii. 63. x. 1. and Michael. in Loc.

[p] Neh. v. 14, 18. His name ſignified conſolation.

[q] Eccluſ. xlix. 13.

[r] Neh. ii. 8, 18.

[s] 2 Macc. ii. 13.

[t] 2 Macc. ii. 13. Vid. Carpz. Introd. ad Lib. Hiſt. Vet. Teſt. p. 343. Friſchmuth's Diſſ. de non Sperand. Reſtitut. Arcæ. Fædor. III. cap. x.

After a continuance of twelve years [u] in the government of Judæa, Nehemiah appears to have returned to Shuſhan, agreeably to his promiſe [x]. What length of time he continued in Perſia cannot be aſcertained. Prideaux, to allow a ſufficient interval for the corruptions that took place during his abſence, ſuppoſes at leaſt five years; the text only ſays, "certain days [y]," which is an ambiguous expreſſion. It is probable that he ſoon obtained permiſſion to return to his country, where he appears to have ended his days. It is not poſſible to determine how long he ſurvived his return. Many learned writers conceiving that Jaddua and Darius, mentioned in the twenty-ſecond verſe of the twelfth chapter of this book, muſt have been the high-prieſt Jaddua, and Darius Codomannus, who was contemporary with the former during his prieſthood [z], and

[u] Chap. xiii. 6.

[x] Nehem. ii. 6.

[y] Nehem. xiii. 6. In the Hebrew it is, "at the end of days," which means, perhaps, at the end of the year.

[z] Some have imagined that Darius, the Perſian, might have been Darius Nothus; but the only Darius who was contemporary with the prieſthood of Jaddua was Darius Codomannus. Beſides, the text enumerating the ſucceſſion of the high-prieſts, evidently ſpeaks of Jaddua as high-prieſt, who did not enter on his office till A. M. 3663; and therefore the verſe muſt have been written above 100 years after Nehemiah went up from Babylon, when we cannot ſuppoſe him to have been leſs than 120 or 130 years of age. The text would even lead us to ſuppoſe that it was written after the death of Joſhua; which would tend ſtill farther to convince us that the paſſage is

and who did not begin to reign till 110 years after the date of Nehemiah's commiſſion: have remarked, that he muſt have lived an extraordinary length of time to have inſerted this account; and, indeed, though it is by no means incredible that Nehemiah might have been permitted by God to live 130 or 140 years, becauſe his eminent virtues were highly conducive to the reſtoration of his country; yet it is, perhaps, more probable to believe, that the whole, or at leaſt the latter part of the regiſter contained in the twenty-ſix firſt verſes of the twelfth chapter was a ſubſequent addition [A], made by thoſe who received the book into the canon; that is, by ſome members of the great ſynagogue; and, indeed, the whole detail appears to be an unconnected and foreign interpolation.

Nehemiah frequently in this book calls upon God not to wipe out the good deeds that he had done: rather in pious ſupplication to be remembered on their account [B], than in any arrogance of heart. To have concealed the actions of his government, would have been inconſiſtent with the office of a faithful hiſtorian; and have deprived poſterity of an ex-

is a ſubſequent interpolation. Joſephus ſuppoſes Sanballat to have lived to the time of Alexander the Great; but the hiſtorian muſt have meant a different perſon from Sanballat the Horonite, who oppoſed Nehemiah; or he muſt have been miſtaken. Vid. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XI. c. viii. Prid. An. Ant. Chriſt. 459.

[A] Voſſi Chron. Sac. c. x. p. 149. Prid. Con. An. Ant. Chriſt. 458.

[B] Chap. v. 19. xiii. 14, 22, 31.

cellent

cellent example. The ſacred writers, conſcious of their own dignity, are equally ſuperior to diſguiſe or vanity. They record their own virtues and their own failings with equal ſincerity.

NEHEMIAH was probably the laſt governor delegated by the Perſian Kings; who, poſſibly, after his death, left the government of Judæa to the high-prieſt of the Jews, till the Perſian empire was deſtroyed by Alexander the Great [c].

[c] Cornel. Bertram, de Rep. Jud. p. 168, 173, 175.

OF THE

BOOK OF ESTHER.

THIS Book is in the Hebrew ſtiled "the volume of Eſther:" it was received into the Jewiſh canon with peculiar veneration; and eſteemed above many of the prophetic Books, probably becauſe therein are deſcribed the origin and ceremonies of the feaſt of Purim. It is called the Book of Eſther [A], becauſe it contains the hiſtory of this Jewiſh captive, who, by her remarkable accompliſhments, gained the affections of Ahaſuerus; and by a marriage with him, was raiſed to the throne of Perſia. The author of the Book is not certainly known. Some

[A] The word Eſther is of Perſian derivation, Starith, Aſtram, Ετερα; its ſignification is uncertain. The vowel is prefixed for ſoftneſs, according to the Hebrew idiom. Vid. Caſtel. in Lexico Perſico, col. 329, & Pfeiffer in Dub. Vex. p. 458. The original word was deſcriptive, and ſignified Dark, which was deemed beautiful by the Jews. Hilar. Œcon. p. 621. Theocrit. Idyl. x. 26—29. Eſther was called by her own family Hadaſſah, which implies a myrtle. Vid. Targum, ad chap. ii. 7.

of

of the fathers [B] ſuppoſe it to have been written by Ezra; others contend that it was compoſed by Joachim high-prieſt of the Jews, and grandſon of Joſedech. The Talmudiſts attribute it to the joint labours of the great ſynagogue [C], which ſucceeded Ezra in the ſuperintendance of the canon of ſcripture. The twentieth verſe of the ninth chapter of the book has led others to believe that Mordecai was the author [D]; but what is there related to have been written by him, ſeems to refer only to the circular letter which he diſtributed [E]. There are, laſtly, other writers, who maintain, that the book was the production of Eſther's and Mordecai's united induſtry [F]; and probably they might have communicated an account of events ſo intereſting to the whole nation, to the great ſynagogue at Jeruſalem; ſome of the members of which may with great reaſon be ſuppoſed to have digeſted the information thus received into its preſent form [G]. We have, however, no ſufficient evidence to determine, nor is it, perhaps, of much importance to aſcertain preciſely who was the author; but that it was a genuine and faithful

[B] Epiphan. de Ponder, & Menſ. cap. iv. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxxvi. Iſidor. Orig. Lib. VI. cap. ii.

[C] Bava Bathra, cap. i. f. 15.

[D] As moſt of the Latin fathers, and Clemens Alexandrinus among the Greeks, Strom. Lib. I. Vid. alſo, Elias in Maſſ. Aben-Ezra, Abrah. Hiſpan. &c.

[E] Chap. ix. 20, 23, 26.

[F] Chap. ix. 29.

[G] Huet. Demonſtrat. Evang. Prop. IV.

deſcription

deſcription of what did actually happen, is certain; not only from its admiſſion into the canon, but alſo from the inſtitution of the feaſt of Purim, which from its firſt eſtabliſhment has been regularly obſerved as an annual ſolemnity [H]; on the fourteenth and fifteenth of the month Adar, in commemoration of the great deliverance which Eſther, by her intereſt, had procured; and which is even now celebrated among the Jews with many peculiar ceremonies, and with rejoicings even to intoxication. This feſtival was called Purim, or the feaſt of lots (Pur in the Perſian language ſignifying a lot) from the events mentioned in chap. iii. 7. ix. 24.

THE Jews [I] maintain that this book was unqueſtionably inſpired by the Holy Ghoſt; and that though all the books of the Prophets, and of the Hagiographi ſhall be deſtroyed at the coming of the Meſſiah, that of Eſther ſhall continue with thoſe of Moſes, for Eſther had ſaid, that "the days of Purim ſhould not fail from among the Jews [K]." This is meant, however, only of that part of the book

[H] 2 Macc. xv. 36, 37. Codex. Theod. Tit. de Judæis. The feaſt is called alſo the feaſt of Haman and Mordecai. The month Adar correſponds with our February and March. Eſther and Mordecai appear to have ordained only a feaſt; but the Jews obſerve, as they profeſs long to have done, a faſt on the 13th, which was the day deſtined for their extirpation. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XI. c. vi. Heut. Prop. IV. Chriſtian Magaz. vol. iv. p. 260. Prid. Con. Ann. 452. Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. c. xxiv. Calmet. Dict. word Purim.

[I] Maimon. More Nevoch, Par. II. c. xlv.

[K] Chap. ix. 28. Pfeiffer. Theſaur. Hermeneut. p. 599.

which

which our church conſiders as canonical: for the ſix chapters which are only in the Greek and Latin copies, were never received by the Jews; and they are rejected as apocryphal by us, in conformity to the ſentiments of the ancient church, for this and other reaſons which will be hereafter aſſigned [L]. It is to be lamented, indeed, that the ſpurious chapters ſhould ever have been annexed to the authentic part, ſince they tended to diſcredit the ſacred book; and it has been ſuppoſed that a diſreſpect for the apocryphal additions induced ſome ancient writers to leave it out of the catalogue of the canonical books [M]; and occaſioned Luther to expreſs a wiſh that it might be expunged from the liſt [N]. Theſe, however, being reſcinded, the remainder is entitled to our reverence as canonical. It is eſtabliſhed by the ſuffrage of antiquity, and bears every mark of authenticity and truth [O].

THERE has been much difference of opinion concerning the period which we ſhould aſſign to the events recorded in this book. It is certain, from

[L] Preface to the apocryphal chapters of Eſther.

[M] Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. IV. c. xxvi. Athan. Epiſt. 39. Gregor. Nazianz. de Ver. & Gen. Lib. S. Script. Some think that Eſther was included in theſe catalogues, under the book of Ezra, as it was ſuppoſed to have been written by Ezra. It was in the catalogues of Origen, Cyril, Hilary, Epiphanius, and Jerom, and in that of the Council of Laodicea. Vid. Infra, Preface to Apocryph. chapters of Eſther. Note z.

[N] Conviv. Serm. f. 494. and Lib. de Serv. Arbit. tom. iii. f 82.

[O] Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. L. VI. c. xxv. Hilar. in Pſalm i.

many inſtances, that the Jews diſtinguiſhed foreign perſons by names different from thoſe which they bear in prophane hiſtory [P]; as, indeed, all nations are accuſtomed to corrupt proper names in conformity to the genius and pronunciation of their own language. Scaliger contends, from a fanciful reſemblance of names, that Ahaſuerus was the ſame with Xerxes [Q]; whoſe Queen, Ameſtris, he conceives, might have been Eſther. Others, upon grounds nearly as conjectural and fallacious, have imagined, that Ahaſuerus was Cyaxares; and others contend that he was Cambyſes [R]. Uſher ſuppoſes, that by Ahaſuerus we are to underſtand Darius Hyſtaſpes [S]; who reſided at Suſa, and whoſe extent of dominion and actions correſpond with the accounts of this book. But to each of theſe opinions conſiderable objections may be drawn from the accounts of prophane hiſtorians [T]; and probably the opinion of Prideaux is beſt ſupported, who maintains, agree-

[P] Vitringa in Hypot. Sac. p. 100. § 49.

[Q] Scaliger de Emendat. Temp. Lib. VI. p. 284. Grotius, Michaelis, &c. Capellus places the hiſtory ſo late as the time of Ochus, who was the ſucceſſor of Artaxerxes Mnemon.

[R] Targ. R. Salomon, Seder Olam Rabba, p. 86.

[S] Uſſeri Annal. Vet. Teſt. Period. Jul. An. 4193. Du Pin, Maius Œcon. V. T. p. 1073. The advocates for this opinion maintain with the Rabbinical writers, that Eſther was the Artyſtona of Darius; but Artyſtona was the daughter of Cyrus; and the hiſtory of Atoſſa by no means accords, any more than does that of Parmis, with the account here given of Vaſhti. Vid. Herod. Lib. III. & Lib. VII.

[T] Vitringa, Lib. VI. p. 110.

ably

ably to the account of Josephus [u]; of the septuagint; and of the apocryphal additions to the book of Esther, that Ahasuerus was Artaxerxes Longimanus [x]; whose extraordinary favour to the Jews might in some measure arise from the suggestions of Esther; the history, therefore, may be supposed to have commenced about A. M. 3544 [y], and it contains an account of a period which extends from about ten to twenty years.

The book describes the advancement of Esther; who, by the interest which she conciliated with Ahasuerus, delivered the Jews from a great destruction which had been contrived for them by Haman, an insolent favourite of the King. It presents an interesting description of mortified pride, and of malice baffled to the destruction of its contrivers. It likewise exhibits a very lively representation of the vexations and troubles, of the anxieties, treachery, and dissimulation of a corrupt court. The manners are painted with great force and fidelity; and the vicissitudes and characters are displayed with dramatic effect. The author seems to have been so intimately acquainted with the Persian customs, that some have

[u] Joseph. Ant. Lib. XI. c. vi.

[x] Prid. Con. An. 470. Sulpit. Sever. Hist. Sac. Lib. II. p. 307. Calmet. Dict. word Vashti. Lightfoot, vol. i. p. 137. The chief objection to the period of Artaxerxes Longimanus is drawn from Esther ii. 5, 6. but that passage may imply, that Kish was carried away captive with Jeconiah; or that Mordecai was a descendant of some one of Nebuchadnezzar's captives.

[y] Petav. Indoct. Templi XII. c. xxvii. Auctor Eccles. Goth. p. 319.

conceived a notion that he tranſcribed his work from the Perſian chronicles [z]. It has been remarked, that the name of God is not mentioned throughout the book; his ſuperintendent providence is, however, frequently illuſtrated: it is ſhewn, indeed, in every part of the work; diſconcerting evil deſigns, and producing great events by means ſeemingly inadequate.

CALMET aſſerts, on the authority of Paul Lucas, that the tombs of Mordecai and Eſther are ſtill ſhewn at Hamaden or Ecbatana in Perſia, in the ſynagogue of the Jews, who are very numerous there.

[z] Hottinger Theſaur. Philolog. Lib. II. ch. i. p. 488. Aben-Ezra, Com. in Proœm. Selden in Theolog. Lib. III. Exercit. V. p. 486.

OF THE

BOOK OF JOB.

CONCERNING the nature, and author of this Book, various opinions have been entertained. Some, as well Chriſtian as Rabbinical writers, have ventured to conſider it as a fictitious relation of the parabolical kind, without any hiſtorical foundation [A]; and others as a dramatic work, grounded on ſome traditional accounts of a real perſonage; or as an allegory, in which, under real characters and circumſtances, are ſhadowed out the Jewiſh nation, and ſome particulars of the Jewiſh hiſtory during [B], or after the Babyloniſh captivity.

[A] Bava Bathra, Anabaptiſts, &c.

[B] Garnett taking up ſome ideas of Biſhop Warburton, has etched out an ingenious allegory, in which the condition of Job is conſidered as deſcriptive of the Jewiſh ſufferings during the captivity. But though he has ſtrained every circumſtance in the hiſtory in order to accommodate it to this repreſentation, he has produced no conviction. A lively fancy may readily diſcover ſuch reſemblances as he has pointed out; but if the judgment be allowed to reflect, it will ſuggeſt unanſwerable objections to the theory, however ſpecious it may be.

tivity [c]. But to indulge in ſuch unauthoriſed fancies is very dangerous, and inconſiſtent with the reſpect due to ſacred writ; and in the preſent inſtance there is no ſufficient foundation for ſuppoſing that the book is any other than a literal hiſtory of the temptation and ſufferings of a real character [d]; ſince it has every external ſanction of authority, and is ſtamped with every intrinſic mark that can characterize a genuine relation.

Of the real exiſtence of Job no reaſonable doubt can be entertained, if we conſider, that it is proved by the concurrent teſtimony of all eaſtern tradition; that the whole hiſtory of this illuſtrious character, with many fabulous additions, was known among the Syrians and Chaldæans; that many of the nobleſt families among the Arabians, are diſtinguiſhed by

Vid. Garnett's Diſſert. on Job. The Uſe and Intent of Prophecy, Diſſ. II. Maimon. More Nevoch, p. 3. c. xxii. Bava Bathra, c. i. fol. 15. Sentimens de quelq. Theolog. Holland. p. 184. Grot. Com. in Job, Lib. I. Le Clerc, &c.

[c] Biſhop Warburton imagined, that Job was intended to perſonate the Jewiſh people on their return from the captivity; that by his three friends were meant the three great enemies of the Jews: Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geſhem; and by Job's wife, the idolatrous wives which ſome of the Jews had married, as we learn from Nehemiah. A ſtrange conceit, of which the improbabilities are by no means gloſſed over by the elaborate reaſoning, and extravagant aſſertions of the learned writer. Vid. Peter's Diſſert. on Job.

[d] Spanheim Hiſt. Job. Schultens Com. in Job, and Commentators in general.

his

his name [E], and boaſt of being deſcended from him; and laſtly, that Job is mentioned as a real character by Ezekiel [F] and St. James [G].

THE book of Job was likewiſe certainly written as a literal relation of actual events: for this is evident from the ſtile of the author; from his mode of introducing the ſubject; and alſo from the circumſtantial detail of habitation, kindred, and condition, as well as from the names of the perſons therein mentioned: which correſpond with other accounts of that age and country, in which Job is generally ſuppoſed to have exiſted [H]. The book then muſt be

[E] As was Zalach Eddin, uſually ſtiled Saladin, ſultan of the Mamalukes: who bore the name of Job, as did alſo his father. Vid. Elmecin. Hiſt. Saracen. Job appears alſo to be mentioned by Ariſtotle in his Diſſertation de Magnitudine Animalium. There are even now traditionary accounts concerning the place of Job's abode. Vid. Thevenot's voyage, p. 447. Le Roque Voyages de Syrie. tom. i. p. 239.

[F] Ezek. xiv. 14.

[G] James v. 11. Vid. alſo Tobit ii. 12, 15. in Vulgate. Clemen. Epiſt. ad Cor. ch. xvii. and Araſt. ap. Euſeb. Præp. Evang. Lib. IX. c. xxv.

[H] It has been ſaid, that the names of Job and his friends have a myſtical meaning; but moſt of the eaſtern names have ſome deſcriptive ſignification. Spanheim derives the name of Job from an Hebrew root, אהב, επιποθειν, amare, a word which imports love, or beloved. And this is more probable than the derivation ſometimes given from a word expreſſive of grief; which, if accepted, muſt be ſuppoſed to have been applied after Job's misfortunes. Michaelis in his preface derives the name of Job from a word which ſignifies repentance, which was perhaps ſuggeſted by Mahomet. Vid. Koran. ch. xxxviii. 40, 44.

allowed to contain a literal hiſtory of real events; though agreeably to the opinion of Grotius, the ſubject is poetically treated; for though the firſt and laſt parts of the book being entirely narration, be expreſſed in a ſtile nearly as ſimple as that of the hiſtorical books of Samuel or of Kings; the reſt reſembles rather the poetical works of David and of Solomon.

Considering then that the work is in a great meaſure poetical; and that probably it was written in metre; we ſhall readily account for that want of order and arrangement, which by the omiſſion of trivial particulars, and by the neglect of diſtinction of times, ſometimes gives an air of improbability to the book; for many circumſtances which muſt have occurred at intervals, are related in a continued and uninterrupted ſeries by the author; intent only on delivering to poſterity memorable events, and ſublime inſtruction; and neglecting every particular not immediately conducive to this deſign [1]. It muſt likewiſe be obſerved, that the verity of the book is not invalidated by the allegorical manner in which ſome things are related. Human events are literally

[1] The calamities of Job ſucceeded each other with a miraculous rapidity. His friends might have literally obſerved ſeven days ſilence in aſhes, from reſpect to his affliction. The artificial regularity which the learned Michaelis conceived to exiſt in the numbers mentioned in this book, does not appear really to obtain; except that when Job's poſſeſſions are ſaid to have been doubled, they are enumerated by an intereſting periphraſis. Comp. chap. i. 3. and xlii. 12.

deſcribed;

deſcribed; but the proceedings of providence, of which we are unable to form any apprehenſion, unleſs from figurative illuſtration, are perhaps here, as in other parts of ſcripture [K], parabolically repreſented under familiar alluſions. Thus are "the ſons of God," or the obedient angels, deſcribed as appearing before the preſence of the Lord, as at the tribunal of an earthly judge; ſo alſo the diſcourſe and agency of Satan are indirectly ſhadowed out, in a manner agreeable to the mode of human intercourſe: in order to accommodate to our conceptions, what would otherwiſe be utterly unintelligible. The government of God, in permitting, and in reſtricting the temptations of the faithful, is not immediately referable to our ſenſes; though his juſtice and mercy may be obliquely intimated by familiar allegory [L]. The interlocutory parts of the books ſhould be conſidered alſo as deſcriptive of real diſcourſe, at leaſt as to the ſubſtance. They are conducted with every appearance of probability, and the paſſions of the ſpeakers ſeem to kindle as they proceed. There is, alſo, no ſufficient reaſon why we ſhould not ſuppoſe God (whoſe deciſion of this important controverſy had been earneſtly deſired) [M], to have actually ſpoken by himſelf or his angel out of the whirl-

[K] Gen. xxviii. 12. Iſa. vi. 1 Kings xxii. 19—22. Zech. iii. 1. Rev. xii.

[L] Le Clerc in Loc. Codurc. Præf. in Job. Pfeiffer Dub. Vex. Cent. iii. Loc. 31.

[M] Chap. x. 2. xii. 5. xiii. 3, 21, 22, 24.

wind;

wind [N]; though some writers have chosen to consider the introduction of the deity as a prophetic vision, represented to Job and his friends in a trance. This account, then, of the suffering and restoration of Job, must be admitted as a real and authentic history: no where allegorical, except, perhaps, in those parts which reveal the agency of superior beings.

The origin of Job is uncertain. There is an appendix [O] annexed to the Greek, Arabic, and Vulgate versions of the book, said to be taken from the ancient Syriac, which represents Job to have been the son of Zareh, a descendant of Esau; and which relates that he reigned in the land of Ausis, upon the borders of Idumæa and Arabia; and upon this authority many ancient writers, and most of the fathers, concur in supposing that he was the same with Jobab, the son of Zerah, mentioned in Genesis [P]; but

[N] The Chaldee Paraphrast taking the word whirlwind in a metaphorical sense, renders it improperly "out of the whirlwind of grief;" as if God had suggested to Job, amidst the conflict of his sorrows, the following thoughts.

[O] Sixt. Senen. Bib. Lib. I. and a translation of this Appendix in Wall's Critical Notes. Vid. also, Athan. Synops. Chrysost. de Patient. Hom. II. Aristæ. Philo, Polyhistor. Euseb. Præp. Lib. IX. cap. xxv. August. de Civit. Dei. Lib. XVIII. cap. xlvii.

[P] Gen. xxxvi. 33. and 1 Chron. xliii. 44. Spanheim in Job, ch. iv. Mercer. Pineda, &c. There is likewise in the Greek, a discourse of Job's wife, which is generally rejected as apocryphal. Vid. Origen. ad African. Hieron. Præf. in Dan. & in Job, & in Quæst. Heb. in Gen. Chrysos. Polych. Olymp.

but as this addition is not found in the Hebrew copies it is conſidered as ſpurious; and the learned Spanheim has, upon very ſtrong grounds, endeavoured to prove, that Job, who is the ſubject of this hiſtory, was a very different perſon from the ſon of Zerah; and that he derived his origin from Uz, the ſon of Nahor, brother to Abraham [Q]; or from Abraham himſelf, by Keturah. We may aſſent, likewiſe, to the opinion of Biſhop Lowth, that Job dwelt in that part of Arabia Petræa which was called Edom [R], and bordered upon the tribe of Judah to the South: being ſituated between Egypt and the land of the

Olymp. Procem. & ad Caten. in Job. Some have imagined that Job's wife was Dinah, the daughter of Jacob. She is called Rachman by the Arabs; and is ſuppoſed by them to have been the daughter of Ephraim; or according to others, of Machir, the ſon of Manaſſeth. Vid. Sale's notes in Coran. She was probably of the country and religion of Job, though cenſured by him upon one occaſion, as having ſpoken fooliſhly. Vid. Weſley's Diſſert. XXVI.

[Q] Hieron. Quæſt. Hebr. in Gen. Spanheim, Hiſt. Job. cap. iv. Bochart, &c.

[R] Uz, was Edom. Vid. Lament. iv. 21. Numb. xxxiv. 3. Joſh. xv. 12. Jerem. xxv. 20. Lowth's Præl. Poet. xxxii. and notes. Weſley's Diſſ. XXIX. Hodges conceives Job and his friends to have lived ſomewhere between Chaldæa and Judæa. Some place him in Arabia Deſerta. All the country between Egypt and the Euphrates was called Eaſt, with reſpect to Egypt; and the Jews who there adopted the expreſſion, afterwards uſed it abſolutely without reference to their change of ſituation. Vid. Mede, fol. p. 467. and Matt. ii. 1. If Moſes were the author of this part, he might, in Midian, which is to the Weſt, properly call Edom the South.

Philiſtines:

Philiſtines: and we may ſuppoſe that his friends inhabited the country immediately adjacent.

JOB does not appear to have been a ſovereign [s], though ſtiled the greateſt man of the Eaſt, with reſpect to his poſſeſſions. He and his friends were, however, perſons of conſiderable rank and importance, as may be collected from various circumſtances incidentally mentioned in the courſe of the hiſtory. If they were not directly deſcended from Abraham, they muſt be claſſed among thoſe, who, out of the family of Iſrael, worſhipped God in ſincerity and truth. The exact period in which they exiſted, cannot be determined. Without deſcending to minute enquiries on the ſubject [t], we may remark, that they appear to have lived ſome time during the ſervitude of the Iſraelites in Egypt; and that the period of their hiſtory may properly intervene between the death of Joſeph and the departure from Egypt [u]; which includes a ſpace of about 140 or 145 years;

[s] The crown mentioned in xix. 9. is only a figurative expreſſion for proſperity. Job and his friends are in the Greek called ſovereigns; that is, great men.

[t] Some Talmudiſts have aſſerted, that Job was born in the very year of Jacob's deſcent into Egypt, and that he died in the year of the Exodus; a conceit founded on a ſuppoſition, that as the camels and oxen were reſtored twofold to Job, ſo the years of his life were doubled; and that, as he lived 140 years after his affliction, ſo he lived ſeventy years before it. Vid. Bava Bathra. The Rabbins ſuppoſe that Moſes alludes to the death of Job when he ſays of the Gentiles, that "their defence is departed from them." Vid. Numb. xiv. 9.

[u] Spanheim Hiſt. Job, cap. vi. p. 106.

in which caſe Job might be ſix or ſeven generations removed from Nahor. And ſince he ſurvived his reſtoration to proſperity 140 years, he may be ſuppoſed to have lived at leaſt during part of the time that the Iſraelites wandered in the wilderneſs [x]. As the age of man in that period did not uſually exceed 200 or 220 years [y], Job was probably overwhelmed in calamities in the prime and vigour of his life: when if poſſeſſed of the greateſt fortitude to ſuſtain his afflictions, he was alſo endued with the livelieſt ſenſibility to feel them. How long his ſufferings may have laſted is uncertain; the ſeven years for which ſome contend, would have been a longer period than can be admitted. It required not ſuch a continuance of time to demonſtrate his faith and unſhaken confidence: and God delights not in unneceſſary ſeverity. But from a conſideration of particulars, it will be evident that leſs than a year cannot be aſſigned for the duration of his diſtreſs; and this is agreeable to the general Hebrew calculations.

In aſſigning this period to Job and his friends, we ſuppoſe them to have flouriſhed before, or about the time of Moſes; and the ſentiments and religious opinions which are maintained in their diſcourſe, are in general ſuch as were conſiſtent with the informa-

[x] Grot. Præf. Diodat. Argum. in Job.

[y] Few of Job's ſuppoſed contemporaries lived to ſo great a length of years; but Job was bleſſed with a long life. He is by ſome ſuppoſed to have died about A. M. 2449.

tion

tion that obtained before the Mofaic difpenfation [z]. Job appears to have worfhipped God in the manner of the Patriarchs, before the prieſthood was confined to Aaron; and in the detail of his piety, he affords a tranfcript of thofe primitive principles which he might have derived from Abraham and Nahor. He and his friends feem to have been acquainted with the rules of traditional religion [A], as collected from occafional revelations to the Patriarchs; together with the deductions of that conſcience which was "a Law to the Gentiles [B]." But it muſt alſo be obſerved, that they ſometimes diſplay a greater knowledge of important truths than was conſiſtent with the general notions that muſt have prevailed in their time. All of Abraham's deſcendants, indeed, who were contemporary with Job, may be ſuppoſed to have been acquainted with the attributes of God; and with the uſe of ſacrifice [C]. They might, from tradition, have collected ſome knowledge of the fall of angels [D]; of the creation; of original ſin [E]; and even of a promiſed Meſſiah. Yet ſtill there will remain ſome particulars of which they were informed, that appear to be above the general information which the Gentiles poſſeſſed; and therefore we may aſſent to an opinion which is maintained by

[z] When Elihu reckons up the modes of revelation, he takes no account of the Moſaic.

[A] Peters's Critical Diſſert. on Job, p. 151.

[B] Rom. ii. 14. and Tertull. cap. ii.

[C] Chap. xlii. 8.

[D] Chap. iv. 18.

[E] Chap. xii. 16. xiv. 4. xv. 14. xxv. 4. xxvi. 13. xxxi. 33.

many,

many, both Jewiſh and Chriſtian writers [F], that Job and his friends were enlightened by a prophetic ſpirit: as certainly ſome few perſons among the Gentiles were [G]; and the conviction that Job was to be conſidered as a patriarchal prophet, was probably the inducement, which influenced the Jews to admit his work into the canon of their ſcripture, if we ſuppoſe it to have been written by himſelf; and not to have been compiled by an inſpired author of their own nation.

Job and his friends were unqueſtionably diſtinguiſhed by extraordinary marks of God's favour; and we are authorized by the book to conſider them as ſometimes favoured by divine revelations. Eliphaz received inſtruction, "from the viſions of the night [H]," and heard the voice of a ſpirit, in ſecret ſtill whiſpers, like the "ſtill ſmall voice" which Elijah heard [I]. Elihu alſo felt a divine power [K]; but Job himſelf appears to have been inveſted with pecu-

[F] Patrick's Appendix to his Paraphraſe. St. Auſtin calls Job "Eximius Prophetarum."

[G] As Balaam, whom the Jews conceived to have been the ſame perſon with Elihu.

[H] Job iv. 13, 16. Hence R. Sol. Jarchi was led to remark, that the Shechinah was upon Eliphaz.

[I] 1 Kings xix. 12.

[K] Chap. xxxii. 8, 18. xxxiii. 15, 16. The name of Elihu, which ſignifies "He is my God," and other circumſtances, have led ſome writers to conſider him as a repreſentative of the Meſſiah; but it muſt detract from the dignity of his character to find that he condemns with too much ſeverity, and even miſtates the ſentiments of Job.

liar dignity; and he enjoyed præ-eminent diſtinctions above the Gentile prophets. God ſpoke to him "out of the whirlwind [L];" and it has been ſuppoſed, from the fifth verſe of the forty-ſecond chapter, that he beheld the manifeſtation of the divine preſence: as perhaps, in a glorious cloud, for ſo the ſeventy underſtood it. He undoubtedly in many places, ſpeaks by the ſuggeſtion of the Holy Spirit; and expreſſes himſelf concerning the doctrine of gratuitous juſtification [M], and of a future ſtate, with a clearneſs and information that were evidently the reſult of prophetic apprehenſion. We can, indeed, attribute the preciſe and emphatic declaration contained in the nineteenth chapter, to nothing but immediate revelation from God; and muſt, agreeably to the opinion of the moſt judicious writers, ancient and modern, conſider it as an evident profeſſion of faith in a Redeemer [N], and of entire confidence in a reſurrection and future judgment [O].

HAVING

[L] So the ſpirit deſcended on the apoſtles at the feaſt of Pentecoſt, "ſuddenly, with a ruſhing mighty wind."

[M] Chap. ix. 2, 3. xxv. 4. Hodges's enquiry into the deſign of the Book of Job.

[N] It is not neceſſary from this expreſſion to conclude, that the whole myſtery of the redemption was revealed to Job; but only that he entertained a conſolatory aſſurance of ſome future perſonage, who ſhould appear to deliver mankind from the curſe of Adam, and to judge the world in righteouſneſs.

[O] Chap. xix. 25—29. Some Commentators, it is true, conſider this paſſage as expreſſive of Job's confidence only in a preſent reſtoration; which is to reſtrict the expreſſions, in a moſt

HAVING obſerved thus much with reſpect to the period in which Job may be ſuppoſed to have lived, it may with more facility be conſidered at what time, and by whom his hiſtory ſhould ſeem likely to have been

moſt unauthorized manner, and to interpret ſcripture upon preconceived notions. Patrick ſuppoſes this temporal reſtoration to be typical of a future reſurrection: profeſſing to follow St. Jerom's authority; but in the place alluded to, St. Jerom (or the author of the commentaries under his name) does not confine the words to a figurative prediction. He ſays abſolutely, that Job in this paſſage, "reſurrectionem futuram prophetat in ſpiritu," propheſieth in the ſpirit the future reſurrection. And though in other places St. Jerom admits, with all writers, a double ſenſe of ſcripture, it by no means follows that he does ſo in this place; where, indeed, only a ſingle ſenſe could be intended, for Job had uniformly declared his deſpondence as to the preſent life. St. Jerom likewiſe, in his epiſtle to Paulinus, affirms, that Job here propheſies the reſurrection of the body in terms as clear and exact as ever were uſed. "Reſurrectionem corporum ſic prophetat ut nullus de eâ vel manifeſtius vel cautius ſcripſerit." Vid. alſo, Epiſt. 61. ad Pammach. This remarkable paſſage is ſuppoſed by the Jews to relate to the reſtoration of happineſs in a future life: and certainly it contains a manifeſt and direct prophecy of the future reſurrection of the body, and of the judgment of the world by Chriſt: as the ſolemnity of the introduction; the tenor of Job's diſcourſe worked up to its higheſt pitch; the replies of his friends; and every expreſſion (as faithfully tranſlated in our Bible) demonſtrate. We cannot reſtrict the prophecy to a confidence in a temporal reſtoration, without abrogating the obvious ſenſe of the words; and without conſidering them as utterly extravagant and unmeaning. Wherefore ſhould "they be graven with an iron pen, and with lead in the rock for ever?" How, "after worms ſhould have deſtroyed his body," could Job "ſee God in the fleſh," except in a future life? Why, laſtly, did he mention

been written. Upon this ſubject, it is not neceſſary to enter into an examination of the various arguments produced by different authors, in ſupport of their ſeveral opinions; but it may be obſerved, that ſome have conceived the book to be the production of Job [P] himſelf; or of Elihu [Q]; while many have attributed it to Moſes [R]; and others to later prophets; as to Solomon [S]; and to Iſaiah [T]. The moſt probable opinion is, that it was compoſed from ſuch memorials as Job himſelf, or his friends, might have left in the Syriac or Arabic language.

that his "Redeemer ſhould ſtand at the latter day upon the earth," and that "his own eyes ſhould behold him," unleſs to declare his aſſurance of a future reſurrection and judgment? To the unexampled miſery of Job, and through him to the reſt of mankind, God might vouchſafe the firſt explicit revelation of a future retributive judgment, and the firſt diſtinct view of a ſpiritual Redeemer. See chap. xiii. 15, and Peters's Critic. Diſſert. on Job.

[P] Orig. Cont. Celſ. Gregor. Mag. in Job. Lib. I. cap. i. Suidas in Job. Iſidor. Hiſp. Sixt. Senens. Hottinger, Walton, Bochart, Huet, &c.

[Q] Lightfoot ſuppoſes Elihu to have been the author, becauſe in the beginning of his diſcourſe he appears to ſpeak in that character; but he is only introduced, as are the other friends, in the firſt perſon, for the ſake of ornament.

[R] Bava Bathra, cap. 1. f. 15. Kimchi, Methodius apud Photium. R. Levi Ben. Gerſon in Præf. Aben-Ezra ad cap. ii. 11. Huet. Demonſt. Evan. Polychron. and Julian. Halicar. ap. Nicæt. in Catena in Job. Hieron. Epiſt. ad Paul.

[S] Gregor. Nazianz. Orat. ad Exæquat. Harduin in Chron. V. Teſt.

[T] Philo Codercus. Præf. in Job. Scaliger. Grotius. Le Clerc. Warburton attributes it to Ezra; and Garnett to Ezekiel.

The

The work is written in a ſtyle agreeable to the genius of the Arabic language. It is ſublime, lofty, compreſſed, and full of figures and alluſive images. It contains, likewiſe, much of that profound philoſophy, and elevated turn of thought, for which the Arabians were as remarkable [u], as for the dignity and allegorical caſt of their language. It may be added, likewiſe, that ſome of the images and remarks in this book appear to have been drawn from circumſtances peculiar and appropriate to Arabia [x]; and that it has every characteriſtic of the moſt venerable antiquity, and all the appearance of an original patriarchal work [y].

[u] 1 Kings iv. 30. Jerem. xlix. 7. Obad. ver. 8. Baruch iii. 13.

[x] Chap. vi. 15—17. xxxvii. 9, 22. Vid. alſo, chap. ix. 26. where Schultens tranſlates the word אניות, by "naves papyro vel arundine textas;" and ſuppoſes it to ſignify thoſe ſhips made of cane, or the papyrus, that were uſed on the Nile. Vid. Lucan. Lib. IV. l. 135, 136.

[y] Grey's Pref. to Job. Origen Cont. Celſ. Euſeb. & Selden upon Rom. ii. 14. Hottinger Smegna Orient. Job mentions only the moſt ancient ſpecies of idolatry, the worſhip of the ſun and moon. Vid. Chap. xxxi. 26, 27. and the moſt ancient kind of writing, by ſculpture. His riches are reckoned by his cattle; and it is by no means clear, that the word *Keſitah*, tranſlated a piece of money, chap. xliii. 11. does not mean a *lamb*. Vid. Spanheim, and Calmet in Gen. xxxiii. 19. Or if it mean money, there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe that it might not be in uſe in the time and country aſſigned to Job. Comp. alſo, chap. xliii. 8. with Numb. xxiii. 1. Bp. Lowth conſiders the ſtyle as bearing evident marks of the moſt remote antiquity. Vid. Prælect. 32.

THAT the book is drawn up in a poetical form, and adorned with poetical embelliſhments, is no proof that it was not written in great part by Job; for though it be inconſiſtent with the violence of outrageous paſſion, or the freedom of animated dialogue, to ſpeak in numbers; yet there is no reaſon why Job may not be ſuppoſed to have amuſed himſelf, when reſtored to eaſe and proſperity, by recollecting the circumſtances of his affliction; and to have deſcribed them with metrical arrangement; it being cuſtomary in the earlier ages to compoſe the moſt important works in ſome kind of meaſure [z]; and conſiſtent with our notions of inſpiration, to ſuppoſe that its ſuggeſtions might be conveyed in the captivating dreſs of poetry. How far Job reduced the work towards its preſent form, cannot be determined; it is contended only, that he left ſufficient materials for ſome Hebrew writer to digeſt it as it now appears. As the Hebrew and Arabic language are derived from the ſame origin: both being deduced from Abraham's deſcendants, among whom the Hebrew was preſerved, and the Arabic originated, they may well be ſuppoſed to approximate towards their ſource, and to have much reſembled each other; as indeed they now do, with great affinity [A]. It is therefore poſſible, that Job might have written the book in the language in which it now exiſts [B]; the

[z] Iſidore Orig. L. I. 27.

[A] Hunt's Clavis Pentateuchi.

[B] All the deſcendants of Abraham, the Iſraelites, Idumæans, and Arabs, probably continued long to uſe the ſame language

the laſt verſes only being added by ſome prophet who received it into the Jewiſh canon [c]. But if we conceive that the Hebrew language muſt have differed ſo much from the Arabic, in the time of Job, that what he wrote muſt have been tranſlated for the uſe of the Hebrews, we may ſuppoſe it to have been compoſed by ſome inſpired writer among the Hebrews; who retained thoſe Syriac and Arabic expreſſions which are interſperſed through the work, as appropriate ornaments of the hiſtory, and as tending, perhaps, to facilitate the verſification. Some critics, indeed, conſider theſe expreſſions as foreign corruptions introduced into the Jewiſh language after the captivity; and therefore imagine that the work muſt have been compoſed after thoſe of David and Solomon; but what they conſider as Chaldaiſms, are

language till ſeparation and gradual innovations produced a change. The names of Iſhmael's, Keturah's, Eſau's, and Job's families, are pure Hebrew. See Sir William Jones's viiith Anniverſary Diſcourſe, and vol. iii. of Aſiatic Reſearches.

[c] It is uncertain when the book was received into the canon. Some think that it was admitted with Solomon's writings by the men of Hezekiah; but probably it was inſerted much earlier. In the Hebrew it is placed immediately after the Proverbs; but in the Septuagint, and by St. Jerom, it was placed as in our Bibles. Peters ſuggeſts, that it might have been preſented to Solomon by the Queen of Sheba; and Weſley, on a conjecture as ſlender, fanſies that it might have been procured by Elimelech and Naomi, when in Moab, which was in Idumæa, and near the ſpot where he conceives Job to have lived. The place which it holds in the book affords no clue to diſcover the period of its admiſſion. It was, however, doubtleſs received before the time of Ezekiel. Vid. Mercer. in Proverbs.

by others, with more probability, repreſented to be only Syriac and Arabic expreſſions [c].

THE book then was probably either written by Job, or compoſed from materials which he left, by ſome writer who lived ſoon after the period of the hiſtory herein deſcribed. They who diſpute this antiquity, maintain, that beſides the pretended Chaldaiſms which have been before repreſented as Arabic and Syriac expreſſions, they diſcover ſome paſſages in the book which are imitations of particulars in the works of David and of Solomon; but if the coincidences produced in ſupport of this aſſertion be not accidental, they prove nothing; ſince there is equal reaſon to ſuppoſe, that David and Solomon might have borrowed from Job, as other prophets certainly did [D]: ſuch imitations of expreſſions for the communication of ſimilar ſentiments being cuſtomary among the ſacred writers.

IF, however, we admit, as ſome have contended, that the book contains alluſions to the Moſaic laws, and alſo to circumſtances and events of the Jewiſh hiſtory; and that theſe alluſions are not merely ſuch as refer to particulars with which Job might

[c] Schultens, Grey's Job, p. 12. It has been diſputed whether the names of Job's daughters are of Hebrew or Arabic extraction. But as both languages have the ſame roots, the diſpute is idle. The word Jehovah, which was known only to the Jews, might have been applied to the deity by the compiler or tranſlator.

[D] Huet. Prop. IV. paſſim.

be acquainted [E]; nor conſiſt in expreſſions that Moſes, if the compiler or tranſlator of the book, might have introduced [F], ſuppoſing him to have compoſed it after the delivery of the Law; though ſuch alluſions cannot be allowed to invalidate the antiquity which is here attributed to Job himſelf; or to diſprove that he might have furniſhed the chief materials for the work; they certainly will prove that it was compoſed in its preſent form, long after the period in which the hiſtory muſt have occurred; and that it was written or tranſlated by an author later than Moſes. As a matter of opinion, however, it may be obſerved, that none ſuch alluſions do appear as ſhould influence us to reject the pretenſions of Job, or of Moſes [G]; none certainly that ſhould

[E] The ſentiments in chap. xvii. 5. xxi. 19. xxii. 6. xxiv. 7, 9, 10. and xxxi. 9, 10, 28. produced by Warburton and others as alluſions to the law, which eſcaped the author, might ſurely be general remarks. All the ſuppoſed alluſions to the flood, and other particulars deſcribed in Geneſis, only prove that Job was acquainted with thoſe traditions which the deſcendants of Abraham muſt have known, without the Moſaic account. Job might have heard likewiſe, of the miracles in Egypt, and at the Red Sea, if we ſuppoſe him to refer to them in chap. xxxviii. 15. ix. 7, 8. xii. 15. xxvi. 12. as likewiſe of the wandering of the Iſraelites in the wilderneſs, and of ſome other contemporary events, at which he is imagined (though perhaps without ſufficient reaſon) to hint. Vid. chap. xii. 24. xxxi. 24. xxix. 25.

[F] The expreſſions in chap. xx. 17. xxii. 22. xxix. 46. xv. 17, 18. might be general, or introduced by Moſes. The nineteenth verſe of the fifteenth chapter may apply to Noah and his ſons. Vid. Peters's Diſſert. on Job, Part I. ſect. 2.

[G] Huet. Prop. IV. in Job.

incline us to believe that the book was not written long before the captivity [H]; ſince of the pretended alluſions to the regal hiſtory of the Jews, none are ſo evident as to juſtify any concluſion to the contrary; and there appears, indeed, to be no ſufficient reaſon, notwithſtanding every paſſage has been critically analyſed for that purpoſe, to ſuppoſe that the book was not written or tranſlated nearer the period of the hiſtory which it deſcribes.

THE opinion, indeed, moſt anciently and generally entertained was, that it was compoſed by Moſes; who might have collected the information which it

[H] The paſſage in chap. xxxiii. 15—26. has been imagined to be deſcriptive of God's proceedings with Hezekiah, 2 Kings xx. 2 Chron. xxxii. as that in chap. xxxv. 8, 12. has been ſuppoſed to coincide with the account of the puniſhment of Manaſſeth, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11—13. ſo likewiſe the denunciation in chap. xxxiv. 20. has been repreſented as alluſive to the ſudden deſtruction of Sennacherib's army, 2 Kings xix. 35. But theſe paſſages of Job contain only general deſcriptions of God's judgments, that might eaſily be drawn to apply to any inſtance; and the laſt might rather be ſuppoſed to refer to the deſtruction of the firſt-born in Egypt, Exod. xii. 29. The pretended reſemblance between the writing of Hezekiah, Iſa. xxxviii. 10—17. and the lamentation of Job, chap. vii. 1—8, is only a caſual ſimilarity in the complaints of miſery. It muſt have been the true ſpirit of theory that could draw any argument from a compariſon between the deſcription of Job's friends, chap. xxx. 1—8. and the account of the Cutheans and Samaritans in Nehemiah iv. 1—4. or that could fancy that the repreſentation of Satan's appearance, Job. i. 6. &c. was deſigned on the model of Zechariah's viſion, Zech. iii. 1—5. See other reſemblances as fanciful or accidental, in Warburton's and Garnett's allegories.

contained,

contained, in the land of Midian [I]; and no objection to this opinion can be drawn from the place which is aſſigned to the book in the Bible, as no attention appears to have been paid to chronology in this arrangement.

THE book, however, whether written originally in the Arabic, or in the Hebrew language; whether compoſed or tranſlated by Moſes, or any ſubſequent prophet, is unqueſtionably to be conſidered as an inſpired work, ſince it was certainly in the Jewiſh canon. It is not, indeed, particularly mentioned by Joſephus: becauſe the hiſtory which it contains was totally unconnected with the Hebrew affairs, of which he profeſſed excluſively to treat [K]. It was, however, included in the catalogue of twenty-two books, which he aſſigned as the number contained in the ſacred liſt [L]. It is cited as ſcriptural by the

[I] Origen Cont. Celſ. Lib. VI. and in Job. Some have conceived that Moſes produced it to conſole the Iſraelites under the hardſhips of their Egyptian bondage. Vid. Origen Com. Bava Bathra, cap. i. Julian. Halicar. ap. Nicæt. The book contains ſome paſſages that reſemble the hymn of Moſes. Compare chap. xxix. 2—6. with Deut. xxxii. 7—14. Grey's Præf. ad Lib. Job, and Anſw. to Warburton. But if Moſes were the author, he probably wrote it in the wilderneſs. No argument can be drawn from the ſuppoſed reſemblance, or difference of ſtile, between the Book of Job, and the writings of Moſes, as the ſubject affords ſuch ſcope for fancy, and ſuch oppoſite opinions have been entertained on the ſubject.

[K] Proœm. Antiq. Jud.

[L] Joſeph. cont. Apion, Lib. I.

apoſtles,

apoſtles [M]; and was univerſally received as canonical by all the fathers, councils, and churches [N].

THOUGH the book of Job is by no means to be conſidered as a drama written with fictitious contrivance; or as reſembling in its conſtruction, any of thoſe Grecian compoſitions which it preceded ſo long; it may ſtill be repreſented as ſo far dramatic, as the parties are introduced ſpeaking with great fidelity of character; and as it deviates from ſtrict hiſtorical accuracy for the ſake of effect. It is a complete, though peculiar work: and regular in its ſubject and the diſtribution of its parts [O]. Mr. Locke juſtly pronounces it to be a perfect poem: the two firſt chapters containing a proſe argument, which he conceives (though without ſufficient reaſon) to have been added by the compiler; as alſo the naming of the ſeveral ſpeakers, the want of which leaves the Canticles in great obſcurity. The interlocutory parts of the book appear to be written in a looſe kind of metre. Many of Job's diſcourſes are ſtrict and perfect elegies [P]. St. Jerom maintained, that the book is written from the third verſe of the third chapter, to the ſixth verſe of the forty-ſecond chapter, in hexameter verſes, with ſome occaſional variations, according to the idiom of the language [Q]. Of this, however, there are no ſufficient in-

[M] 1 Cor. iii. 19. James v. 11.

[N] Gregor. Præf. in Job.

[O] Lowth's Præl. Poet. xxxiii.

[P] Chap. iii. vi. vii. x. xii. xvii. xix. xxix. xxx.

[Q] Lowth's Prælect. xiv. and Shuckford's Connect. vol. ii. ch. ix. Hieron. Præf. in Lib. Job.

dications.

dications. The concluſion, which relates the final proſperity and death of Job, muſt have been added by the compiler.

THE many excellent qualities of Job have rendered him to all ages an illuſtrious example of righteouſneſs. Euſebius has juſtly remarked, that he was ſo diſtinguiſhed for wiſdom, as to have found out by divine grace, a conduct not unſuitable to the evangelical doctrine of our Saviour; and it appears from the paſſage, which in the Septuagint is annexed to this book [R], that the reverence which the Jews entertained for his character, had given riſe to a tradition, by no means incredible, according to the opinion of Theophanes, that Job was one of thoſe ſaints who roſe out from their graves at the reſurrection of Chriſt; a tradition which, if unſupported by any authority, may be ſtill conſidered as bearing a merited teſtimony to his ſuperior righteouſneſs [S].

To form a perfect notion of the great excellence of Job's character, we muſt contemplate him in every viciſſitude of his eventful life; and conſider his conduct under every temptation of hazardous proſperity, or aggravated diſtreſs. We muſt judge

[R] The addition in the Septuagint runs thus: γεγραπται δε παλιν αναστησεσθαι αυτον μετ ων αναστησιν ο κυριος. The author of which muſt have believed that Job deſcribes his aſſurance of a future reſurrection in this book, as particularly, in the conteſted paſſage; for where elſe in the Old Teſtament is it written that Job ſhould riſe again?

[S] The book of Job, it is ſaid, was read in the ancient church on faſt days, and at Eaſter: Job being conſidered as a figure of Chriſt. Vid. Origen in Job.

of

of him, not from the unguarded expreſſions which his ſufferings occaſionally provoked [u]; but from the deliberate ſtrains of his piety; and his patient ſubmiſſion to the divine will: under every poſſible affliction but the pangs of guilt, and the terrors of deſpair. If the miſtaken ſeverity of his friends ſometimes provoked him to tranſgreſs the decency of an humble and modeſt doubt of his own innocence, yet reproof and recollection inſtantly called him to a confeſſion of unworthineſs, and to a becoming reſignation to the divine decrees [x]. It was, indeed, in vindication of his own character that he diſplayed the fair deſcription of his life: eminently diſtinguiſhed as it was for integrity and benevolence; and it has been a want of ſufficient attention to the ſcope of the dialogue, and to the firm principles to which Job, notwithſtanding his occaſional impatience, ultimately adheres, that has cauſed ſuch ſtrange miſconceptions as have been entertained with reſpect to his character [y] and diſcourſe. To obviate, however, all erroneous objections to an example which the ſacred writers have conſidered as excellent [z]; and to preclude falſe notions concerning ſentiments repreſented as conſiſtent with the divine wiſdom [a], it is neceſſary to advert to the provocations which Job had re-

[u] Chap. vi. 26.

[x] Chap. viii. 20. xxxiv. 31, 32. xl. 4, 6. xlii. 3, 4.

[y] Garnett and Warburton.

[z] Ezek. xiv. 14. James v. 11. Vid. alſo, Tobit ii. 12. ver. 15, Vulgate.

[a] Chryſoſt. Hom. v. ad Pop. Antioch.

ceived, and to the complicated diſtreſs that diſconcerted his mind, and irritated his paſſions. His friends, who appear to have viſited him with charitable intentions [B], did in reality only aggravate his misfortunes; for having taken up a common, but miſtaken notion, that proſperity and afflictions were dealt out in this life according to the deſerts of men [C], they accuſe him of having merited his extraordinary misfortunes by ſome concealed guilt [D]; and are led on by the heat of contention to "vex his ſoul by their reproaches, and to break him in pieces with words." Job, ſolicitous to refute the charge, and to vindicate the ways of Providence, affirms, on the contrary, that adverſity is no proof of divine wrath, but often deſigned as a trial [E]. That in this life the good and the bad indiſcriminately flouriſh, and often periſh in promiſcuous deſtruction [F]; and that, conſequently, there muſt be ſome period for judgment and equal retribution, for which the wicked are reſerved [G]. With reſpect to himſelf, he diſclaims all fear from reflecting on his paſt conduct; and then deſcribes with ſomewhat too much of pride and confidence, the excellency of thoſe virtues, with which he had "arrayed" his proſperity. With an impatience likewiſe, that his

[B] Chap. ii. 11—13.
[C] Chap. iv. 7, 8.
[D] Chap. iv. 7, 8, 9. viii. 13. xviii. 21. xxii. 5.
[E] Chap. vii. 18. xxiii. 10.
[F] Chap. ix. 22—24. xii. 6. xxi. 7—15.
[G] Chap. xxi. 30. xxvi. 6. xxvii. 8, 9, 19. xxxi. 3.

ſufferings,

ſufferings, great as they were, could not juſtify, he profeſſes a thorough deſpondence and diſregard with reſpect to the preſent life; earneſtly wiſhes [H] for death, and appeals to the deciſions of a future judgment for juſtification [I]. For this aſſumption, and for this impatience, he is juſtly cenſured by Elihu: whoſe "wrath was kindled againſt Job, becauſe he juſtified himſelf rather than God." Elihu, however, reprehends him with rather too much harſhneſs, and in ſome meaſure miſrepreſents his ſentiments [K]. Yet inaſmuch as Elihu had reſted the equity of the divine diſpenſations on the acknowledged attributes of God, he had reaſoned juſtly as far as he had proceeded; and therefore, perhaps, is only tacitly [L] cenſured by the deity, when God pronounces that "Job had ſpoken the thing that was right." God even purſues the argument of Elihu, and in a ſtile of inimitable majeſty, proclaims his own uncontrolled power, and unfathomable wiſdom to the diſcoun-

[H] Chap. vi. 8—11. vii. 7. ix. 21. x. 1. xvi. 22. xvii. 11—16. Theſe paſſages fully prove, that Job did not look forward to any temporal reſtoration; of which he declares alſo the improbability, and laments only that he ſhould not live to ſee his reputation vindicated. Vid. chap. xiv. 7—14. vii. 8—10. x. 21, 22. Peters's Diſſert. on Job, Part II. ſect. 4. Scott's Verſion of Job, Appendix II.

[I] Chap. xiii. 15—19. xiv. 12—15. xvi. 19. xvii. 15. xxiii. 3—10. xxvi. 6. xxx. 23, 24. xxxi. 14. all conſiſtently with chap. xix. 25—29.

[K] Chap. xxxiii. 8, 9. xxxiv. 5, 9, 35.

[L] Some have conceived that the opening of God's ſpeech was addreſſed as a reproof to Elihu, though the ſubſtance of the anſwer was deſigned for Job.

tenancing of human knowledge. After the moſt awful and impreſſive repreſentation of his own glorious works and attributes [M], and after ſome reprehenſion of Job, for his arrogant profeſſion of innocence, the Almighty condemns the falſe reaſoning of the three friends, and ratifies the concluſion which Job had made with reſpect to a future judgment [N].

SUCH is the ſcope of the diſcourſe, which finely unfolds God's deſigns in dealing out afflictions to mankind [O]; which, when it firſt appeared, muſt have conveyed truths that unaſſiſted reaſon had not learnt; and have been well calculated to refute the abſurd notions which then began to riſe concerning the two independent principles of good and evil [P]. When the book was received into the Jewiſh canon, it muſt likewiſe have been well adapted to counteract any erroneous conceptions that might have been formed from a conſideration of the temporal promiſes of the Law: which though they covenanted preſent reward to the Hebrew nation, conſidered as a com-

[M] Chap. xl. 8. 10.

[N] Job had ſpoken right by having recourſe to the arrangements of a future judgment. If the divine juſtice did not reſt on this foundation, it muſt have executed its decrees in the preſent life, as the friends of Job maintained. God does not condeſcend to explain the equity of his own counſels, any farther than by approving the convictions of Job; this was never queſtioned in the controverſy, but defended on both ſides though on different principles.

[O] Job's character was fully proved and perfected by this trial, and the pride and impatience of his temper corrected.

[P] Uſe and Intent of Prophecy, p. 207.

munity,

munity, by no means aſſured to individuals a juſt and exact remuneration in the preſent life [Q]. The book likewiſe admirably ſerves to prove, that the power of temptation, allowed to evil ſpirits, is reſtricted in merciful conſideration of human weakneſs. It exhibits in an intereſting hiſtory, the viciſſitudes of human affairs. It illuſtrates the danger of contention; the ingratitude and baſeneſs of common friendſhip [R]; the vigilant care of providence; and the neceſſity of reſignation to the divine will. Through the whole work we diſcover religious inſtruction ſhining forth amidſt the venerable ſimplicity of ancient manners. It every where abounds with the nobleſt ſentiments of piety, uttered with the ſpirit of inſpired conviction. It is a work unrivalled for the magnificence of its language, and for the beautiful and ſublime images which it preſents [S]. In the wonderful ſpeech of the Deity, every line delineates his attributes, every ſentence opens a picture of ſome grand object in creation [T] characterized by

[Q] This is evident from the relations of ſacred hiſtory; from the complaints of the Pſalmiſt; and from the ſufferings and denunciations of the Prophets.

[R] Job xlii. 11.

[S] The book, in ſome of its beauties of imagery and deſcription, has been compared with, and juſtly preferred to, the works of Homer. Vid. Weſley's Diſſ. VI. ex Gnom. Homer. Jacob du Port. Burke on the Sublime, P. 2. Sect. 4, 5.

[T] Various have been the conjectures concerning the Behemoth, and the Leviathan, which are ſo forcibly deſcribed in this book. The former is by ſome ſuppoſed to have been the elephant, by others, the hippopotamus; the latter is uſually

by its moſt ſtriking features. Add to this, that its prophetic parts reflect much light on the œconomy of God's moral government; and every admirer of ſacred antiquity, every enquirer after religious inſtruction, will ſeriouſly rejoice, that the enraptured ſentence of Job [u] is realized to a more effectual and unforeſeen accompliſhment: that while the memorable records of antiquity have mouldered from the rock, the prophetic aſſurance and ſentiments of Job are graven in ſcriptures, that no time ſhall alter, no changes ſhall efface.

uſually repreſented to have been the crocodile. But as the deſcriptions exceed the character of all animals now known, they have been conceived to contain ſome myſtery. It is one deſign of ſcripture to convince mankind of ignorance; and difficulties, while they exerciſe ſagacity, inculcate the uſeful leſſon of humility. Vid. Bochart Hierozoicon. Lib. V. c. xv.

[u] Chap. xix. 23.

OF THE

BOOK OF PSALMS.

THE Book of Pſalms, which in the Hebrew is entitled Sepher Tehillem [A], that is, the Book of Hymns, or Praiſes of the Lord, contains the productions of different writers [B]. Theſe productions are called, however, the Pſalms of David, becauſe a great part of them was compoſed by him, who for his peculiarly excellent ſpirit, was diſtinguiſhed by the title of "the Pſalmiſt [C]." Some of them were perhaps penned before, and ſome after the time of David; but all of them by perſons under the influence of the Holy Ghoſt, ſince all were

[A] In the New Teſtament it is called by Chriſt and his apoſtles, Βιβλος ψαλμων. Luke xx. 42. Acts i. 20. The word Pſalter is derived from ψαλτηριον, pſaltery, a muſical inſtrument, ſtiled Nabal in Hebrew. It was ſtrung and made of wood in the ſtile of a harp, and in the ſhape of a Greek delta, Δ. Vid. 1 Kings x. 12. Athæn. Lib. IV. cap. xxiii. and Calmet's Diſſ. ſur les Inſtrum.

[B] Hieron. ad Cyprian. & Sophron. Hilar. Præf. in Pſal. Genebr. in Pſal. i. R. David Kimchi.

[C] 2 Sam. xxiii. 1.

judged

judged worthy to be inſerted into the canon of ſacred writ. Ezra probably collected them into one book, and placed them in the order which they now preſerve, after they had been previouſly collected in part [D]. It appears that the 150 Pſalms therein contained were ſelected from a much greater number, which, it may be preſumed, were not ſuggeſted by the Holy Spirit. The Levites were, indeed, enjoined to preſerve in the temple [E], all ſuch hymns as might be compoſed in honour of God; and of theſe, doubtleſs, there muſt have been a large quantity; but ſuch only could be admitted into the canon as were evidently inſpired compoſitions; and we may judge of the ſcrupulous ſeverity with which they were examined, ſince the numerous hymns of Solomon were rejected; and even, as it is ſaid, ſome of David's himſelf were thought unentitled to inſertion [F]. The authority of thoſe, however, which we now poſſeſs, is eſtabliſhed, not only by their rank among the ſacred writings [G], and by the unvaried teſtimony of every age, but likewiſe by many in-

[D] 2 Chron. xxix. 25—28. They were ſo collected in the time of Chriſt. Vid. Luke xx. 42. The ſecond Pſalm is cited by St. Paul in the order in which it now ſtands, Acts xiii. 33. Vid. Athan. in Synop. tom. ii. p. 86. Hilar. Prol. in Lib. Ezra iii. 10, 11. & Proleg. in Pſalm. Euſeb. ad Pſal. lxxxvi.

[E] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. III. c. i. & Lib. V. c. i.

[F] The prophets were not always empowered to write by the ſuggeſtion of the ſpirit; though St. Ambroſe thought that David did always poſſeſs the gift of prophecy. Vid. Præf. in Pſalm i. 1 Sam. xvi. 13.

[G] They are cited as the Law. John x. 34. xii. 34.

trinſic proofs of inſpiration. Not only do they breathe through every part a divine ſpirit of eloquence, but they contain numberleſs illuſtrious prophecies that were remarkably accompliſhed, and that are frequently appealed to by the evangelical writers. The ſacred character of the whole book is eſtabliſhed by the teſtimony of our Saviour, and his apoſtles; who in various parts of the New Teſtament appropriate the predictions of the Pſalms as obviouſly appoſite to the circumſtances of their lives, and as intentionally preconcerted to deſcribe them. Yet, as Dr. Allix juſtly remarks, though the ſacred writers have fixed the ſenſe of near fifty Pſalms [H], they have by no means cited all that they might have cited; but have only furniſhed a key to their hearers, making applications incidently as opportunities occurred.

DAVID has, by the later Jews, been reckoned among the Hagiographi [I]; not being conſidered by them as a prophet any more than Daniel, becauſe he lived differently from the prophets, and amidſt the magnificence of a court. He was ſuppoſed, however, by them, to have propheſied by the inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt, without any exterior impulſe,

[H] New Teſtament, paſſim.

[I] R. Albo, Maam. III. c. x. Kimchi Madraſh Sillim, vol. ii. The Jewiſh gradations of prophecy are often very fanciſully determined; but David muſt be pronounced a prophet by the Jewiſh rule, ſince he is a true prophet who is not deceived in foretelling future events. Vid. Maimon. de Fundam. Legis. cap. x. § 2. Deut. xviii. 22. Jerem. xxviii. 9. Maimon. More Nevoch. Par. II. cap. xlv.

but

but from ſome internal influence urging, and enabling him to ſpeak and utter inſtructions on divine, as well as human ſubjects, with more than his wonted powers, and in a ſtile ſuperior to that of the productions of human abilities. But the prophetic character of David is eſtabliſhed on much higher authority, and the importance and clearneſs of his predictions demonſtrate his title to the higheſt rank among the prophets [K]. Many attempts have been made to aſcertain preciſely which Pſalms were derived from David's pen, as likewiſe to diſcover the authors of the others. Some are ſaid to have been compoſed by Moſes; and ſome were written in, or after the captivity [L]. It is neceſſary to refer to the commentators at large for various opinions upon this ſubject; and without dilating, to canvaſs the date and author of each individual Pſalm, or to ſpecify the circumſtances that occaſioned its production, it may be briefly obſerved, that the Talmudiſts [M] and Maſoretic writers admit, as authors of the Pſalms, Adam, Melchiſedec, Abraham, Moſes, the ſons of Korah, David, Solomon, Aſaph, Jeduthun, and Ethan; and that Calmet, after a judicious inveſtigation of particulars, has adopted nearly the following arrangement, if we conſider them as diſtributed in the Hebrew, and in our tranſlation.

[K] 2 Sam. xxi. 1. xxiii. 2. 2 Chron. xxix. 25. Nehem. xii. 24. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. Matt. xiii. 35. xxii. 43. xxvii. 35. Mark xii. 36. Acts i. 16. ii. 30. iv. 25. Heb. iii. 7.

[L] Lightfoot Chron. of Old Teſt. Maius Œcon. V. Teſt. Hammond's, Patrick's, and Horne's Commentaries.

[M] Bava Bathra, cap. i. Kimchi, &c.

UNDER the firſt head, are twelve Pſalms, of which the chronology is uncertain; viz. i. iv. v. viii. xix. lxxxi. xc. xci. xcix. cx. cxxxix. cxlv. The firſt of theſe was probably compoſed by David, or Ezra; the lxxxiſt. [x] is attributed to Aſaph; the xcth. to Moſes; and the cxth. to David. The authors of the others are unknown, though ſome of them are inſcribed to David.

UNDER the ſecond head are included the Pſalms which were compoſed by David, during the perſecution carried on againſt him by Saul, or other enemies; theſe are in number twenty; viz. vii. xi. xvi. xvii. xviii. xxii xxxi. xxxiv. xxxv. lii. liv. lvi. lvii. lviii. lix. lxiv. cix. cxl. cxli. cxlii.

UNDER the third head are placed ſuch as David compoſed on different occaſions, after his acceſſion to the throne; theſe, which amount to forty-four, are as follow: ii. vi. ix. xii. xx. xxi. xxiii. xxiv. xxviii. xxix. xxxii. xxxiii. xxxviii. xxxix. xl. xli. li. lx. lxi. lxii. lxiii. lxv. lxviii. lxix. lxx. lxxxvi. xcv. xcvi. ci. ciii. civ. cv. cvi. cviii. cxviii. cxix. cxx. cxxi. cxxii. cxxiv. cxxxi. cxxxiii. cxliii. cxliv.

THE fourth head contains thoſe which were written by David during the rebellion of Abſalom, amounting to ſix; which are the iiid. xlii. xliii. lv. lxxi. lxxxiv.

THE fifth head includes thoſe written from the death of Abſalom to the captivity; theſe, which ap-

[x] This was probably deſigned to be ſung in the Temple upon the feaſt of Trumpets; as alſo at the feaſt of Tabernacles.

pear to be ten, are the xxxth. xlv. lxxii. lxxiv. lxxvi. lxxviii. lxxix. lxxxii. lxxxiii. cxxxii. Of theſe, probably, David compoſed the xxxth. the lxxiid. and poſſibly the lxxviiith. The lxxvith. ſeems likely to have been produced after the miraculous deliverance from the Aſſyrian army, in the days of Hezekiah.

The fixth head comprehends the Pſalms compoſed during the diſtreſſes and captivities of the church; theſe were written chiefly by Aſaph and Korah, and their deſcendants. They may be reckoned thirty in number, and are the xth. xiii. xiv. xv. xxv. xxvi. xxvii. xxxvi. xxxvii. xliv. xlix. l. liii. lxvii. lxxiii. lxxv. lxxvii. lxxx. lxxxviii. lxxxix. xcii. xciii. xciv. cii. cxv. cxxiii. cxxv. cxxix. cxxx. cxxxvii.

To the laſt head are aſſigned thoſe hymns of joy and thankſgiving which were written, as well after other deliverances as upon the releaſe from the Babyloniſh captivity, and at the building and dedication of the temple. Theſe, which are twenty-eight, are the xlvith. xlvii. xlviii. lxvi. lxxxv. lxxxvii. xcvii. xcviii. c. cvii. cxi. cxii. cxiii. cxiv. cxvi. cxvii. cxxvi. cxxvii. cxxviii. cxxxii. cxxxiv. cxxxv. cxxxvi. cxxxviii. cxlvi. cxlvii. cxlviii. cxlix. cl.

According to Calmet's account, from which this in ſome reſpects varies, only forty-five Pſalms are poſitively aſſigned to David; though probably many more ſhould be aſcribed to him. It is, however, of leſs conſequence to determine preciſely by whom the Holy Spirit delivered theſe oracles, ſince we have indubitable evidence of the ſacred character of the

whole book; for it is collectively cited in ſcripture [o], and is prophetical in almoſt every part [p]; and ſeveral of thoſe perſons who are ſuppoſed to have contributed to the compoſition of the work, are expreſsly repreſented as prophets in ſcripture [q].

THE name of David is prefixed to about ſeventy-three; and many perſons have collected from the laſt verſe of the ſeventy-ſecond Pſalm, which reports, that "the prayers of David, the ſon of Jeſſe, are ended," that David's hymns do there conclude; and if we conſider that this Pſalm was probably produced on the eſtabliſhment of Solomon on the throne of his father, it is not unlikely that it contains the laſt effuſions of David's prophetic ſpirit [r]; but as his compoſitions are not all placed together, many which follow in the order of the book, may have been written by him; and we may ſuppoſe him to have been the author of at leaſt all thoſe which are not particu-

[o] The evangelical writers cite the Pſalms in general under the name of David.

[p] Gutheri Theolog. Proph. p. 98. Brentius ad 2 Jam. xxiii. 26.

[q] Heman, Aſaph, and Jeduthun, ſuppoſed authors of ſome of the Pſalms, are in ſcripture called ſeers, and ſaid to have propheſied. Vid. 2 Chron. xxix. 30. xxxv. 15. 1 Chron. xxv. 1—5. Vid. alſo 1 Kings iv. 30, 31, where Ethan (whom ſome conſider as the author of Pſal. lxxxviii. and lxxxix.) is ſpoken of as eminent for wiſdom.

[r] In the proſpect of the proſperity of his ſon's government, David, on the ſtrength of divine promiſes, breaks out into an enraptured deſcription of the duration, extent, and character of the kingdom of Chriſt. Vid. ver. 7, 11, 12, 17.

larly

larly aſſigned to others, nor conſiſtent with his time [s]. The Pſalms are certainly not arranged with any regard to chronology [t], and many which follow the ſeventy-ſecond in the order of the book, are inſcribed with the name of David. It muſt be obſerved, however, that the titles prefixed to the Pſalms, ſome of which are not in the Hebrew manuſcripts, are often of very queſtionable authority; and ſometimes undoubtedly not of equal antiquity with the text, being poſſibly affixed as conjectural. They were not always deſigned to point out the author, but often apply to the muſicians [u] appointed to ſet them to muſic. They likewiſe ſometimes appear to be only terms of inſtruments [x], or directions for the choice of tunes [y]. But it muſt be

[s] St. Peter cites the ſecond Pſalm as David's, though it is not inſcribed to him; and others which have no title, were undoubtedly written by David. Comp. Pſal. xcv. 7, 8, with Heb. iv. 7. Pſal. xcvi. with 1 Chron. xvi. 7, &c. Pſal. cv. with 1 Chron. xvi. 8. Pſal. cvi. 47, 48, with 1 Chron. xvi. 35, 36. On the other hand, ſome which have no title were not written by David, as cxxxvii. which was not written till the Babyloniſh captivity.

[t] Hieron. in Jerem. xxv.

[u] Some of the names prefixed to the Pſalms are aſſigned to the Muſicians whom David appointed. Vid. 1 Chron. xv. 16—22. xvi. 7. The word Lamnetzeach is ſuppoſed to mean, "to the leader of the band." It is derived from Nnatzeach, which ſignifies Overſeer.

[x] As, perhaps, Nehiloth, Sheminith, Gitith, Michtam, Aijeleth Shehar, &c. Vid. Geirus ad Pſa. v. Michaelis, &c.

[y] As Neginoth. Vid. Burney's Hiſt. Muſ. 1 vol. p. 235. Harmer's Obſervations on Paſſages in Scripture, vol. ii. ch. ii. Obſerv. III,

confeſſed,

confeſſed, that upon this ſubject the opinions are ſo various and conjectural, that nothing ſatisfactory can be offered, any more than upon the word Selah [z], which ſo often occurs.

MANY fanciful diviſions of this book have been made. The Jews, at ſome uncertain period, divided it into five ſections, probably in imitation of the diviſion of the Pentateuch [A]. The four firſt books of this diviſion terminate with the word Amen; the fifth with Hallelujah. Our preſent order of the Pſalms is, perhaps, that in which they were ſung in the temple [B], and this may account for the occaſional repetitions.

MOSES may be conſidered as the firſt compoſer of ſacred hymns [C]; all nations ſeem afterwards to have adopted this mode of expreſſing their religious ſentiments, and to have employed hymns in celebrating the praiſes of their reſpective deities [D], on

[z] Selah is tranſlated in the Septuagint διαψαλμα, a pauſe in ſinging, or a change in tune. Vid. Hieron. Epiſt. ad Marcel. & Calmet Diſſert. ſur Selah.

[A] Madraſh Sillim. fol. 2, vol. i. Hieron. Præf. in Pſalm. juxt. Heb. Verit. Hilar. Prol. in Pſalm. Huet aſſigns this diviſion to the time of the Maccabees. Vid. Prop. IV. in Pſalm Gregor. Nyſſ. in Pſalm, Lib. I. c. v. Lib. II. c. xi. 2 Macc. ii. 13, 14.

[B] Euthym. Prol. in Pſalm. Comp. Pſalms xiv. and liii.

[C] Exod. xv. Deut. xxxii.

[D] Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. Lib. II. c. xvii. Pharmut. de Nat. Deor. Targ. in Cent. i. 1. Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. VI. Porphyry de Abſtin. Lib. IV. § 8. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. Lib. IV. c. xvii.

an

an idea derived, perhaps, from revealed truth, that they were acceptable to the divine nature.

The compoſition of ſacred hymns was carried to great excellence by ſucceeding prophets; but was improved to its higheſt perfection under David; who, if he did not firſt introduce, certainly eſtabliſhed the cuſtom of ſinging them in public ſervice [E], with alternate interchange of verſe, as in our cathedral ſervice [F]. David was, indeed, a great patron of ſacred muſick [G]; he introduced many new inſtruments and improvements in this ſpiritual part of the Jewiſh worſhip, which was ſuperinduced over that of ſacrifice [H]. The practice of Pſalmody muſt have received ſome interruption from the ſuſpenſion of the temple ſervice, during the captivity [I]. It was however reſtored, with leſs ſplendour, by Ezra [K]; and continued till it received the ſanction of Chriſt and his apoſtles, who themſelves recommended the cuſtom by their precept and example [L].

The

[E] 1 Chron. vi. 31. xvi. 6, 7. Eccluſ xlvii. 9.

[F] Ezra iii. 11.

[G] 1 Chron. xvi. 42. xxiii. 5. xxv. 1. 2 Chron. vii. 6. xxix. 26. and Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. VII.

[H] Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVII. c. xiv. Coduro, Caten. in Pſalm. Præp. p. 10.

[I] Pſalm cxxxvii.

[K] Ezra iii. 11. Nehem. xii. 24, 31, 38, 40.

[L] Matt. xxvi. 30. 1 Cor. xiv. 15. Epheſ. v. 19. Coſ. iii. 16. Rev. xiv. 2, 3. Vid. Calmet's Preface, Boſſuet, Hammond, Allix, &c. All vocal and inſtrumental performers were excluded from the Jewiſh ſynagogues after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. The little ſinging now uſed is of modern introduction.

THE hymn which our Saviour ſung with his diſciples at the concluſion of the laſt ſupper, is generally ſuppoſed to have conſiſted of the Pſalms that are contained between the one hundred and thirteenth and the one hundred and eighteenth incluſive [M]. This was called by the Jews the great Hallel, or Hymn, and was uſually ſung by them at the celebration of the Paſſover. Chriſt alſo exclaimed, in his ſolemn invocation on God from the croſs, in the complaints of the twenty-ſecond Pſalm [N], and breathed out his laſt ſentiments of expiring piety in the words of David [O]. "No tongue of man or angel," ſays Dr. Hammond, "can convey an higher idea of any book, and of their felicity who uſe it aright." The chriſtian church has therefore, by divine appointment, adopted the Pſalms as a part of its ſervice, and choſen from its firſt inſtitution to celebrate the praiſes of God in the language of ſcripture [P]; and theſe ſacred

duction. The Jews, indeed, conſider it as improper to indulge in ſuch expreſſions of joy before the advent of their expected Meſſiah. The German Jews, however, entertain different notions, and have a muſical eſtabliſhment. They have, likewiſe, ſome melodies, ſuppoſed to be very ancient; but it is thought that the ancient diatonic notes are preſerved more in the Pſalmody of our church, than in the Jewiſh ſynagogues.

[M] Buxtorf. Lex. Talmud. הלל. Col. vi. 13. Lightfoot, vol. ii. 354, 444.

[N] Comp. Matt. xxvii. 46. with Pſa. xxii. 1.

[O] Comp. Luke xxiii. 46. with Pſa. xxxi. 5.

[P] 1 Cor. xiv. 15. Epheſ. v. 19. Coloſ. iii. 16. James v. 13. Conſtit. Apoſt. Lib. II. c. lvii. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. III. c. xxxiii. Theod. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. II. c. xxiv. Auguſt.

ſacred hymns are, indeed, admirably calculated for every purpoſe of devotion.

THE expreſſions and deſcriptions of the Pſalms may ſeem to ſome perſons to have been appropriate and peculiar to the Jewiſh circumſtances; and David, indeed, employs figures and alluſions applicable to the old diſpenſation. But as in recording temporary deliverances and bleſſings vouchſafed to the Jews, we commemorate ſpiritual advantages thereby ſignified, we uſe the Pſalms with the greateſt propriety in our church. We need, as an elegant

Auguſt. Conf. Lib. IX. c. vi. § 2. Lib. X. c. xxxiii. § 2. Plin. Epiſt. Lib. X. Epiſt. xcvii. Tertul. Apol. c. ii. p. 3. c. xxxix. p. 36. Fabric. Bib. Græc. vol. v. c. i. The practice of pſalm-ſinging, as uſed in our choir, is derived, probably, from the ancient alternate chanting of the Jews (Ezra iii. 11. Nehem. xii. 24.) authorized by the apoſtles, and adopted into the earlieſt chriſtian churches. It was certainly inſtituted at Antioch, between A. D. 347 and 356, by Flavianus and Diodorus; who divided the choir into two parts, which ſang alternately. Singing was ſoon afterwards introduced into the Weſtern church by St. Ambroſe; and adopted with improvements by Gregory the Great, who eſtabliſhed the grave Gregorian chant which now prevails in the Romiſh church. Choral muſick was brought into England by the companions of Auſtin the Monk, A. D. 596, and firſt eſtabliſhed at Canterbury. Objections were often made in this country to church muſic, but it was approved by the compilers of King Edward's Liturgy, and ſoon after was compoſed the formula that now regulates (with little variation) the choral ſervice, which, though occaſionally ſuſpended till the reſtoration of Charles the Second, has ſince been uniformly continued. Vid. Mart. Gerbert. Muſic. Sac. Bedford's Temple Muſic. Hawkins's Hiſtory of Muſic, vol. i. and ii. Burney's Hiſtory of Muſic, vol. i. p. 154, &c.

commen-

commentator has obſerved, but ſubſtitute the Meſſiah for David, the Goſpel for the Law, and the church of Chriſt for the church of Iſrael. We need but conſider the ceremonies and ſacrifices of the Law as the emblems of ſpiritual ſervice, of which every part hath its correſpondent figure; and we appropriate the Pſalms to our own uſe as the nobleſt treaſure of inſpired wiſdom [Q]. They finely illuſtrate the connection which ſubſiſted between the two covenants, and ſhed an evangelical light on the Moſaic diſpenſation by unveiling its inward radiance. The veneration for them has in all ages of the church been conſiderable. The fathers aſſure us, that in the earlier times, the whole book of Pſalms was generally learnt by heart [R], and that the miniſters of every gradation were expected to be able to repeat them from memory; that Pſalmody was every where a conſtant attendant at meals and in buſineſs: that it enlivened the ſocial hours, and ſoftened the fatigues of life. The Pſalms have, indeed, as Lord Clarendon obſerves, been ever thought to contain ſomething extraordinary for the inſtruction and reformation of mankind [S].

NUMBERLESS

[Q] Bp. Horne's Preface to Com. on the Pſalms.

[R] "Pueri modulantur domi, viri foro circumferunt," ſays an ancient writer. Vid. Baſil, & Ambroſe Præf. in Pſalm.

[S] Horne's Preface. It is remarkable, that this Book of Pſalms is exactly the kind of work which Plato wiſhed to ſee for the inſtruction of youth, but conceived it impoſſible to execute,

NUMBERLESS are the teſtimonies that might be produced in praiſe of theſe admirable compoſitions, which contain, indeed, a complete epitome of the hiſtory, doctrines, and inſtructions of the Old Teſtament [T]; delivered with every variety of ſtile that may encourage attention, and framed with an elegance of conſtruction ſuperior far to the fineſt models in which Pagan antiquity hath incloſed its mythology. Theſe invaluable ſcriptures are daily repeated without wearineſs, though their beauties are often overlooked in familiar and habitual peruſal. As hymns immediately addreſſed to the Deity, they reduce righteouſneſs to practice, and while we acquire the ſentiments, we perform the offices of piety; as while we ſupplicate for bleſſings we celebrate the memorial of former mercies.

HERE, likewiſe, while in the exerciſe of devotion, faith is enlivened by the diſplay of prophecy. David, in the ſpirit of inſpiration, uttered his oracles with the moſt lively and exact deſcription. He expreſſed the whole ſcheme of man's redemption: the incarnation [U]; the paſſion; the reſurrection [X]; and aſcenſion of the Son of God, rather as a witneſs, than as a prophet. As an eminent type of his

ecute, as above the power of human abilities. Τȣτο δε Θεȣ, η Θειȣ τινος, αν ειη· but this muſt be the work of a God, or of ſome divine perſon.

[T] Luther called the Pſalms a ſmall Bible. The Pſalter was one of the firſt books printed after the diſcovery of the art.

[U] Pſa. ii. 8. Acts xiii. 33. Talmud Sucah. cap. v. Aben-Ezra. R. Kimchi.

[X] Pſalm xvi. 9—11.

deſcendant,

deſcendant, he is often led in the retroſpect of the circumſtances of his own life, to ſpeak of thoſe of Chriſt: while he is deſcribing his own enemies and ſufferings, the ſpirit enlargeth his ſentiments, and ſwelleth out his expreſſions to a proportion adapted to the character of the Meſſiah. Hence even the perſonal ſufferings of Chriſt are deſcribed with minute and accurate fidelity; and in the anticipated ſcene of prophecy we behold him pictured on the croſs, with every attendant circumſtance of mockery and horror, even to the "parting of his garments," and to the "caſting lots for his veſture [y]."

DAVID apprized that the Meſſiah ſhould ſpring from his own immediate family [z], looked forward with peculiar intereſt to his character and afflictions. In the foreknowledge of thoſe ſufferings which Chriſt ſhould experience from his "familiar friends," and from the numerous adverſaries of his church, David ſpeaks with the higheſt indignation againſt thoſe enemies who prefigured the foes of Chriſt; and imprecates, or predicts, the ſevereſt vengeance againſt them [a]. So ſignal a repreſentative of Chriſt, indeed,

[y] Pſalm xxii. 16—18. compared with Matthew xxvii. 35. Burnet's 10th and 11th ſermons in Boyle's lectures.

[z] 2 Sam. vii. 12. Pſalm cxxxii. 11, 18.

[a] The ſeverity with which David inveighs againſt the wicked, has been erroneouſly conſidered as inconſiſtent with the ſpirit of true religion. The paſſages, however, which are objected to on this ſcore, are either prophetic threats, or general denunciations of God's wrath againſt ſin, as it were perſonified. It is the ſpirit, rather than David, which utters its

deed, was David conſidered by the ſacred writers, that our Saviour is often expreſsly diſtinguiſhed in ſcripture by his name [B]; and the Jews themſelves perceived that the Meſſiah and his kingdom were ſhadowed out as capital objects in the deſcriptions of the Pſalmiſt. Senſible that what David uttered as often not applicable to his own perſon and hiſtory [C], muſt have had reference to ſome future character, they tranſcribed whole paſſages from them into their prayers, for the ſpeedy coming of the great object of their hopes; though with that blindneſs that characterizes their conduct with the marks of glaring inconſiſtency, they deny that theſe ſpiritual alluſions are applicable to the perſon of our Saviour; and therefore ſtill pray in the words of the Pſalmiſt, for the arrival of the Meſſiah [D].

JOSEPHUS aſſerts [E], and moſt of the ancient writers maintain, that the Pſalms were compoſed in

its imprecations againſt the unrighteous enemies of the church. Forgiveneſs and mercy towards the perſon of his own enemies were diſtinguiſhed parts of David's character, of which we ſee very beautiful proofs in 1 Sam. xxiv. 4, 10. xxvi. 7—13. 2 Sam. i. 17—27. xix. 16—23. He curſed only thoſe whom God inſtructed him to curſe; and the church, in its public ſervice, joins in theſe curſes, as a religious ſociety, and conſiſtently with the ſpirit of charity.

[B] Iſa. liii. 3. Jerem. xxx. 9. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. Hoſ. iii. 5.

[C] Pſa. xvi. 10. xxii. 16—18. lxxii. and Juſtin Martyr, Dial. Iſt.

[D] Chandler's Defence, ch. iii. ſect. 2. Comp. Pſa. xxxii. with 13th, 16th, 18th, and other prayers. Hoſan Rabba.

[E] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. VII. c. x. Hieron. Epiſt. ad Paulin.

metre. They have undoubtedly a peculiar conformation of ſentences, and a meaſured diſtribution of parts. Many of them are elegiac, and moſt of David's are of the Lyric kind. There is no ſufficient reaſon, however, to believe, as ſome writers have imagined, that they were written in rhyme, or in any of the Grecian meaſures. Some of them are acroſtic; and though the regulations of the Hebrew meaſure are now loſt, there can be no doubt, from their harmonious modulation, that they were written with ſome kind of metrical order, and they muſt have been compoſed in accommodation to the meaſure, to which they were ſet [F]. The Maſoretic writers have marked them in a manner different from the other ſacred writings [G].

The Hebrew copies and the Septuagint verſion of this book contain the ſame number of Pſalms; only the Septuagint tranſlators have, for ſome reaſon which does not appear, thrown the ninth and tenth into one [H]; as alſo the one hundred and fourteenth, and

[F] It is probable, that the Pſalms were originally divided into verſes terminating with the concluſion of the ſenſe, though many of the Jews maintain, that the Maſorites introduced the diſtinction. Vid. Buxtorf. Com. Maſoret. p. 38.

[G] Some perſons ſuppoſe, that the points were at firſt muſical characters, and, it is ſaid, that they ſtill ſerve, not only to mark the accentuation in reading, but alſo to regulate the melody in ſinging the prophecies; and that as to high and low, as well as to long and ſhort notes. Vid. Burney's Hiſt. of Muſic, vol. i. p. 251.

[H] So that the Romaniſts, who uſe St. Jerom's tranſlation, reckon one behind us from the xth. to the cxivth. and two from

and the one hundred and fifteenth; and have divided the one hundred and ſixteenth, and the one hundred and forty-ſeventh, each into two. In the Syriac [I], and Arabic verſions, indeed, and alſo in moſt copies of the Septuagint, as well as in an Anglo-Saxon verſion, there is annexed to the hundred and fifty canonical Pſalms, an additional hymn, which is entitled, "a Pſalm of thankſgiving of David, when he had vanquiſhed Goliah." This though admitted by ſome [K] as authentic, was probably (as it is not in the Hebrew) a ſpurious work of ſome Helleniſtical Jew; who might have compiled it out of the writings of David, Iſaiah, and Ezekiel. The verſion of the Pſalms in our Bible, which was made by the tranſlators employed under James the Firſt, is poſterior to that printed in our Prayer-books, which was executed in 1539 [L]. This laſt, as very excellent, and familiarized by cuſtom, was retained in the Liturgy, though as tranſlated chiefly from the Septuagint, with ſome variation in conformity to the

from thence to the cxvith. and again one from thence to the cxlviith. from whence they continue to agree with us.

[I] It is ſaid in the Syriac, that ſome add twelve Pſalms, which however are there rejected as without authority.

[K] Athan. in Synop.

[L] Introduction, p. 35. This was Tyndal's and Coverdale's tranſlation, corrected by Tonſtal and Heath. In this the fourteenth Pſalm contains eleven verſes; whereas in the Hebrew, and in our Bible, it contains but ſeven (or rather eight). The three verſes are, however, genuine, though loſt from the Hebrew, for they are in the Septuagint, and are cited by St. Paul. Vid. Rom. iii. 13—18.

Hebrew, corrupted by the Maſoretic points, it does not ſo exactly correſpond with the original as does that in our Bibles [M].

DAVID was the ſon of Jeſſe, of the tribe of Judah, a deſcendant of that family to which God's covenant was made. He was born about A. M. 2920, and lived ſeventy years, during forty of which he was in poſſeſſion of the throne of Iſrael [N], being raiſed by God from an humble to a conſpicuous ſtation, that the genealogy of the Meſſiah might be diſplayed, and aſcertained with more clearneſs and diſtinction [O]. He was eminently diſtinguiſhed for every great and amiable quality. The particulars of his intereſting life are diſplayed with peculiar minuteneſs in the ſacred hiſtory; and many of his Pſalms are ſo characteriſtic of the circumſtances under which they were compoſed, that there cannot be a more en-

[M] Where the tranſlators of the verſion publiſhed in our prayer-books have varied from the Septuagint, and followed the Hebrew Maſoretic copies, the Hebrew text, if read without the points, would be as conſiſtent with the Septuagint, and other ancient verſions, as it is with the tranſlation in our Bible. In the inſtances, then, where the authors of the verſion in the Liturgy have varied, in compliance with the Maſoretic authority, they have generally erred. Vid. Dr. Brett, and Johnſon, at end of Holy David.

[N] He reigned over Judah ſeven years and ſix months, and in Jeruſalem over all Iſrael and Judah thirty-three years, being anointed long before he came into poſſeſſion of the throne. Vid. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. and Chandler.

[O] The word David implies "beloved." Vid. 1 Sam. xiii. 14. and xvi. 18. Bp. Porteus's ſermon on David's character.

gaging

gaging task, than that of tracing their connection with the events of his history [P]; and of discovering the occasions on which they were severally produced, in the feeling and descriptive sentiments which they contain. If in the successive scenes of his life, we behold him active in the exercise of those virtues which his piety produced, we here contemplate him in a no less attractive point of view. In this book we find him a sincere servant of God, divested of all the pride of royalty; pouring out the emotions of his soul, and unfolding his pious sentiment in every vicissitude of condition. At one time we have the prayers of distress; at another, the praises and exultation of triumph. Hence are the Psalms admirably adapted to all circumstances of life, and serve alike for the indulgence of joy, or the soothing of sorrow; they chase away despondence and affliction, and furnish gladness with the strains of holy and religious rapture.

[P] Delany's Life of David.

OF THE

BOOK OF PROVERBS.

THE Proverbs, as we are informed at the beginning, and in other parts of the book [A], were written by Solomon, the ſon of David; a man, as the ſacred writings aſſure us, peculiarly endued with divine wiſdom [B]. Whatever ideas of his ſuperior underſtanding we may be led to form by the particulars recorded of his judgment and attainments, we ſhall find them amply juſtified, on peruſing the works which remain in teſtimony of his abilities. This enlightened monarch, being deſirous of employing the wiſdom which he had received to the advantage of mankind, produced ſeveral works for their inſtruction. Of theſe, however, three only were admitted into the canon of the ſacred writ by Ezra; the others being either not deſigned for religious inſtruction, or ſo mutilated by time and accident, as to have been judged imperfect. The book of Proverbs, that of Eccleſiaſtes, and that of the

[A] Vid. chap. i. 1. xxv. 1.

[B] Vid. 1 Kings iii. 12. iv. 29—31. xi. 9. 2 Chron. i. 12.

Song

Song of Solomon, are all that remain of him, who is related to have ſpoken "three thouſand proverbs [c];" whoſe "ſongs were a thouſand and five;" and who "ſpake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon, even to the hyſſop that ſpringeth out of the wall;" who "ſpake alſo of beaſts, and of fowls, and of creeping things, and of fiſhes." If, however, many valuable writings of Solomon have periſhed, we have reaſon to be grateful for what ſtill remains. Of his proverbs and ſongs the moſt excellent have been providentially preſerved; and as we poſſeſs his doctrinal and moral works, we have no right to murmur at the loſs of his phyſical and philoſophical productions.

This book of Proverbs contains the maxims of long experience, framed by one who was well calculated, by his rare qualities and endowments, to draw juſt leſſons from a comprehenſive ſurvey of human life. Solomon judiciouſly ſums up his precepts in brief energetic ſentences, which are well contrived for popular inſtruction [d]. The wiſdom, indeed, of all

[c] Vid. 1 Kings iv. 32. Joſephus (Antiq. Lib. VIII. c. ii.) magnifies the account of ſcripture to 3000 books of Proverbs; and St. Jerom as erroneouſly conceives, that theſe 3000 Proverbs are contained in the preſent book; but we muſt admit that many of this number have periſhed. Some have ſuppoſed, that the phyſical books of Solomon were extant in the days of Alexander, and were tranſlated by means of an interpreter into the works of Ariſtotle and Theophraſtes. Vid. Juchaſin. Euſebius (as cited by Anaſtaſius) ſays, that King Hezekiah ſuppreſſed them, becauſe abuſed by the people.

[d] The Proverbs of Solomon are called in the Hebrew Meſhalim, from משל, Marſhal, dominatus eſt. The word may

all ages, from the higheſt antiquity, hath choſen to compreſs its leſſons into compendious ſentences, which were peculiarly adapted to the ſimplicity of earlier times; which are readily conceived and eaſily retained; and which circulate in ſociety as uſeful principles, to be unfolded and applied as occaſion may require. The inſpired ſon of David had the power of giving peculiar poignancy and weight to this ſtyle of writing, and his works have been as it were the ſtorehouſe from which poſterity hath drawn its beſt maxims [E]. His Proverbs are ſo juſtly founded on principles of human nature, and ſo adapted to the permanent intereſts of man, that they agree with the manners of every age; and may be aſſumed as rules for the direction of our conduct in every condition and rank of life, however varied in its complexion, or diverſified by circumſtances; they embrace not only the concerns of private morality, but the great objects of political importance [F].

be tranſlated χύριαι δόξαι, ſententiæ maximæ ratæ, authoritative maxims, elevated precepts. Vid. Job xxvii. 1. Maius Vet. Teſt. p. 838. Bacon de Augm. Scient. They are to be conſidered as general maxims, and not as univerſally and invariably applicable, or as always true in a ſtrict ſenſe without any exceptions.

[E] Many of the ſacred writers who followed Solomon borrowed his thoughts and expreſſions; and many heathen writers are indebted to him for their brighteſt ſentiments. Vid. Huet. Prop. 4. where imitations are produced from Theognis, Sophocles, Euripides, Anaxilaus, Plato, Horace, and Menander.

[F] St. Baſil ſays of this book, that it is ὅλως διδασκαλία βίου, an univerſal inſtruction for the government of life.

Subſequent

Subſequent moraliſts have, in their diſcourſes on œcumenical prudence, done little more than dilate on the precepts, and comment on the wiſdom of Solomon. Grotius, extenſive as were his own powers, was unable to conceive that the Book of Proverbs could be the work of one man, and ſuppoſes it to have been a collection of the fineſt proverbs of the age, made in the ſame manner as thoſe publiſhed by ſome of the emperors at Conſtantinople, and perfected from various collections under Hezekiah [G]. But this opinion, founded on ſome rabbinical accounts, can deſerve but little regard. The work might, perhaps, compoſe part of the 3000 proverbs which Solomon is deſcribed to have uttered, being probably digeſted as far as the twenty-fifth chapter by that monarch himſelf, and afterwards received into the canon with ſome additions.

The book may be conſidered under five diviſions. The firſt part, which is a kind of preface, extends to the tenth chapter. This contains general cautions and exhortations from a teacher to his pupil, delivered in very various and elegant language: duly connected in its parts; illuſtrated with beautiful deſcriptions; decorated with all the ornaments of poetical compoſition, and well contrived as an engaging introduction to awaken and intereſt the attention.

The ſecond part extends from the beginning of the tenth chapter to the ſeventeenth verſe of the twenty-ſecond, and contains what may ſtrictly and properly be called Proverbs, given in unconnected

[G] Grotius Præf. in Prov.

general

general ſentences [H] with much neatneſs and ſimplicity [I]; adapted to the inſtruction of youth, and probably more immediately deſigned by Solomon for the improvement of his ſon [K]. Theſe are truly, to uſe his own compariſon, "apples of gold in pictures of ſilver."

In the third part, which contains what is included between the ſixteenth verſe of the twenty-ſecond chapter and the twenty-fifth chapter, the tutor is ſuppoſed, for a more lively effect, to addreſs his pupil as preſent; he drops the ſententious ſtyle of proverbs, and communicates exhortations in a more continued and connected ſtrain.

The proverbs which are included between the twenty-fifth and thirtieth chapters, and which conſtitute the fourth part, are ſuppoſed to have been ſelected from a much greater number by the men of Hezekiah; that is, by the prophets whom he employed to reſtore the ſervice and the writings of the church, as Eliakim, and Joah, and Shebnah; and probably Hoſea, Micah, and even Iſaiah [L], who

[H] The general ſcope of the diſcourſe, however, muſt be remembered, even in the explication of detached ſentiments.

[I] The Proverbs generally conſiſt of two ſentences, joined in a kind of antitheſis; the ſecond being ſometimes a reduplication, ſometimes an explanation, and ſometimes an oppoſition in the ſenſe to the firſt. This ſtyle of compoſition produces great beauties in many other parts of ſcripture, where it is employed for poetical arrangement. Vid. Lowth's Prælect. xix.

[K] Rehoboam; though the phraſe "my ſon" is only a term of general application. Vid. Hebrew, chap. xii. 3. Michael. Præf. in Lib.

[L] Vid. R. Moſes Kimchi.

all

all flouriſhed in the reign of that monarch, and doubtleſs co-operated with his endeavours to re-eſtabliſh true religion among the Jews. Theſe proverbs, indeed, appear to have been ſelected by ſome collectors after the time of Solomon, as they repeat ſome which he had previouſly introduced in the former part of the book [M].

The fifth part contains the prudent admonitions which Agur, the ſon of Jakeh, delivered to his pupils, Ithiel and Ucal; theſe are included in the thirtieth chapter. It contains alſo the precepts which the mother of Lemuel delivered to her ſon, as deſcribed in the thirty-firſt chapter.

Concerning theſe perſons whoſe works are annexed to thoſe of Solomon, commentators have entertained various opinions. The original words which deſcribe Agur as the author of the thirtieth chapter, might be differently tranſlated [N]; but admitting the preſent conſtruction as moſt natural and juſt, we may obſerve, that the generality of the fathers, and ancient commentators, have ſuppoſed that under the name of Agur, Solomon deſcribes himſelf, though no ſatisfactory reaſon can be aſſigned for his aſſuming this name [O]. Others, upon very inſuf-

[M] Comp. chap. xxv. 24. with xxi. 9. xxvi. 13. with xxii. 13. xxvi. 15. with xxix. 24. xxvi. 22. with xviii. 8, &c.

[N] They might be tranſlated the words of the Collector. In the Septuagint, where this chapter is placed immediately after the xxivth, we read inſtead of the firſt verſe, τα δε λεγει ο ανηρ τοις πιστευσι Θεῳ, και πανομαι, Thus ſpeaketh the man to thoſe who believe, and I ceaſe.

[O] Vid. Lowth's xviiith Prælect. and Calmet.

ficient

ficient grounds, conjecture that Agur and Lemuel were interlocutors with Solomon; the book has no appearance of dialogue, nor is there any interchange of perſon: it is more probable, that though the book was deſigned principally to contain the ſayings of Solomon, others might be added by the men of Hezekiah: and Agur might have been an inſpired writer [P], whoſe moral and proverbial ſentences (for ſuch is the import of the word Maſſa, rendered Prophecy [Q]). were joined with thoſe of the wiſe man, becauſe of the conformity of their matter. So likewiſe the dignity of the book is not affected, if we ſuppoſe the laſt chapter to have been written by a different hand; and admit the mother of Lemuel to have been a Jewiſh woman, married to ſome neighbouring prince; or Abiah, the daughter of the high-prieſt Zechariah, and mother of king Hezekiah; ſince, in any caſe, it muſt be conſidered as the production of an inſpired writer, or it would not have been received into the canon of ſcripture. But it was perhaps meant that by Lemuel we ſhould underſtand Solomon [R]; for the word which ſignifies

[P] The ſecond and third verſes, though they tend as well as the eighth to prove that the chapter was not written by Solomon, yet by no means invalidate the author's claim to inſpiration, who here deſcribes himſelf as devoid of underſtanding before he received the influx of divine wiſdom. In the Septuagint the third verſe expreſſes a ſenſe directly contrary, Θεος δεδιδαχε με Σοφιαν και γνωσιν αγιων εγνωκα, God hath taught me wiſdom, and I have learnt the knowledge of the ſaints.

[Q] משא. Prov. xxx. 1. xxxi. 1.

[R] Vid. R. Nathan. Prov. iv. 3, 4.

one

one belonging to God, might have been given unto him as deſcriptive of his character, ſince to Solomon God had expreſsly declared that he would be a father [s].

Dr. Delany, who was a ſtrenuous advocate for this opinion, declares that he took great pains to examine the objections that have been alledged againſt it, and aſſures us that they are ſuch as readers of the beſt underſtanding would be little obliged to him for retailing, or refuting. One of the chief objections, indeed, rather confirms what it was intended to deſtroy. The mother of Lemuel thrice calls her ſon, Bar, a word no where elſe uſed throughout the Old Teſtament, except in the twelfth verſe of the ſecond Pſalm [t]; but this rather proves that Lemuel muſt have been deſigned to imply Solomon, becauſe his father is the only perſon who uſes the word [u]. Dr. Delany then conceives that the mother of Lemuel was Bathſheba [x], and that the commendation annexed was deſigned for her, and he vindicates her character as deſerving the

[s] 2 Sam. vii. 14.

[t] בר. Bar in the Chaldee ſignifies a ſon. David might have uſed it in that ſenſe as well as Bathſheba in this book; for we know not how early foreign expreſſions (if it be one) might have been adopted into the Hebrew language.

[u] Vid. Delany's Life of David, Book IV. chap. xxi. and Calmet.

[x] Vid. alſo Bedford, p. 607, Calmet and Locke, who are of the ſame opinion. Prov. iv. 3. Bathſheba is by ſome ſuppoſed to have been endued with the ſpirit of prophecy. Vide chap. xxxi. 1.

eulogium. Should ſome circumſtances in the deſcription, however, be judged inapplicable to her, there is no reaſon why we ſhould not conceive a general character to have been intended. It appears then upon a collective conſideration, that the greateſt part of the book was compoſed, and perhaps digeſted by Solomon himſelf; that ſome additions were made, principally from the works of Solomon, by the men of Hezekiah; and that the whole was arranged into its preſent form, and admitted into the canon by Ezra. It is often cited by the evangelical writers [y], and the work, as it now ſtands, contains an invaluable compendium of inſtructions. It is ſuppoſed to have been the production of Solomon when arrived at maturity of life: when his mind had multiplied its ſtores, and been enlarged by long obſervation and experience. It was probably written before the book of Eccleſiaſtes, for it ſeems to be therein mentioned [z].

Solomon was born about A. M. 2971. He ſucceeded David about eighteen years after, and enjoyed a proſperous reign of near forty years [a]. Under his government the kingdom was remarkable for its well regulated œconomy, and its extenſive commerce. It was ſo enlarged by his conqueſts and prudent ma-

[y] Vid. Matt. xv. 4. Luke xiv. 10. Rom. xii. 16, 17, 20. 1 Theſſ. v. 15. 1 Pet. iv. 8. v. 5. James iv. 6, &c. paſſim.

[z] Eccleſ. xii. 9.

[a] The name of Solomon is analogous to Pacific, and is happily deſcriptive of the peaceful proſperity which he enjoyed. The Rabbins conſider it as appellative.

nagement,

nagement, that "he reigned over" or made tributary "all the kings from the river (Euphrates) even to the land of the Philiſtines and the borders of Egypt [B]." Illuſtrious men were attracted from all parts by his fame for wiſdom and magnificence [C]. The ſon of Sirach ſaid of him, that he was "a flood filled with underſtanding; that his ſoul covered the whole earth; and that he filled it with dark parables [D]." His character, like that of every human being, was occaſionally marked with the ſtains of ſin, particularly towards the cloſe of life, when his enfeebled mind was ſeduced to corrupt affections and idolatry. The high reputation which he enjoyed, occaſioned many ſpurious writings to paſs under the ſanction of his name, as the Pſalter, as it is called, of Solomon, which conſiſts of eighteen Greek Pſalms, and which was probably the work of ſome Helleniſtical Jew [E], who might have compiled it from the writings of David, Iſaiah, and Ezekiel [F]. Another book likewiſe, entitled, The Cure

[B] 2 Chron. ix. 26.

[C] 1 Kings x. 20.

[D] Ecclus xlvii. 14, 15. The ancients prided themſelves much on the knowledge of parables and proverbs. Vid. Prov. i. 6. Wiſd. viii. 8. Ecclus. i. 25. vi. 35. xxix. 1, 2, 3.

[E] The Helleniſtical Jews were Jews diſperſed in foreign countries, who ſpoke the Greek language.

[F] This Pſalter, which, like moſt of the Helleniſtical works, is full of Hebraiſms, was copied from an ancient Greek manuſcript in the Augſburg library by Andrea Scotto, and publiſhed with a Latin verſion by John Lewis de la Cerda. Vid. Calmet. Pref.

Cure of Diſeaſes, mentioned by Kimchi; The Contradictions of Solomon, condemned by Pope Gelaſius; and his Teſtament, cited by M. Gaumin; with five other books, mentioned by Alfred the Great in his Mirror of Aſtrology; and four named by Trithemenus, which favour of magical invention, are probably all ſpurious; as well as the letters which he is ſaid to have written to Hiram, and Hiram's anſwers, though Joſephus conſiders theſe laſt as authentic [G]. The magical writings that were attributed to Solomon, were ſo aſſigned in conſequence of an idea which prevailed in the Eaſt, that Solomon was converſant with magic; an idea derived, perhaps, from the fame of thoſe experiments which his phyſical knowledge might have enabled him to diſplay; but which, however obtained, certainly prevailed; for we learn from Joſephus [H], that many perſons, when charged with the practice of magic, endeavoured to juſtify themſelves, by accuſing Solomon of uſing charms againſt diſeaſes, and of forming conjurations to drive away demons. Joſephus

Pref. Gen. ſur les Pſeaumes. Theſe Pſalms appear from the index at the end of the New Teſtament to have been formerly in the Alexandrian manuſcript, though they have been loſt or torn from thence.

[G] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. VIII. cap. ii. Joſephus grounds the authenticity of theſe letters on Jewiſh and Tyrian records; but beſides other ſuſpicious circumſtances, Hiram is repreſented as ſpeaking of Tyre as an iſland, whereas old Tyre, which was contemporary with his period, was ſituated on the continent.

[H] Vid. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. VIII. cap. ii.

relates

relates alſo, that one named Eleazer drove away ſeveral demons in the preſence of Veſpaſian by means of a ring, in which was encloſed a root, marked, as was ſaid, by Solomon; and by pronouncing the name of that monarch: and amidſt the ſuperſtitious notions that long afterwards continued to delude the eaſtern nations, we find ſuch imaginary influence over evil ſpirits aſcribed to the name of Solomon.

The Septuagint and other verſions of this book differ occaſionally from the Hebrew original, and contain indeed more proverbs, ſome of which are to be found alſo in the Book of Eccleſiaſticus. The order likewiſe of the poetical books is different in the Septuagint [1], and in ſome manuſcripts, where the metrical books run thus, Pſalms, Job, and Proverbs.

[1] Codex Alexand. Vid. Grabe in Prolog. cap. i. § 2. Melito apud Euſeb. Eccleſ. Hiſt. Lib. IV. cap. 26, &c.

OF THE

BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES;

OR, THE

PREACHER.

THIS Book was unqueſtionably the production of Solomon, who for the great excellency of his inſtructions was emphatically ſtiled "the Preacher." It is ſaid by the Jews to have been written by him, upon his awakening to repentance [A], after he had been ſeduced in the decline of life to idolatry and ſin; and if this be true, it affords valuable proofs of the ſincerity with which he regretted his departure from righteouſneſs. Some, however, have aſcribed the work to Iſaiah [B]. The Talmudiſts pretend that Hezekiah was the author of it [C]; and Grotius,

[A] Seder Olam Rabba, c. xv. p. 41. Hieron. in Eccleſ. i. 12. Vid. alſo chap. ii. 10. vii. 26.

[B] R. Moſes Kimchi. R. Gedalias in Schalſch Hakkab. fol. 66.

[C] Bava Bathra, c. i. f. 15. The Talmudiſts ſuppoſe Hezekiah to have produced, or compiled, the three books of Solomon, as likewiſe the book of Iſaiah. Vid. Peters's Preface to Diſſert. on Job, 8vo. edit.

upon

upon ſome vague conjectures, conceives that it was compoſed by order of Zerubbabel [D]. But we ſhall be convinced that it ſhould be aſſigned to Solomon, if we conſider that the author ſtiles himſelf "the ſon of David, the King in Jeruſalem;" and that he deſcribes his wiſdom, his riches, his writings, and his works, in a manner applicable only to Solomon [E]; as alſo that the book is attributed to him both by Jewiſh and Chriſtian tradition. The foreign expreſſions, if they really be ſuch, which induced Grotius to conſider the book as a production ſubſequent to the Babyloniſh captivity, might have been acquired by Solomon in his intercourſe and connection with foreign women [F]. But the ſtile of the work muſt have often occaſioned the introduction of unuſual words [G]. The later Jews are ſaid to have been deſirous of excluding it from the canon [H], from ſome contradiction and improprieties which they fancied to exiſt by not conſidering the ſcope and de-

[D] Grot. in Eccleſ.

[E] Chap. i. 1, 12, 16. ii. 4—10. vii. 25—28. viii. 16. xii. 9.

[F] 1 Kings xi. 12.

[G] Maimon. More Nevoch. Part II. c. lxvii. Of the words produced as foreign by Grotius, all are now allowed to be genuine Hebrew, except two, viii. 1. פשר. x. 8. לטע. which were, perhaps, Arabic or Chaldaic expreſſions in uſe in the time of Solomon. Vid. Calovius.

[H] Maimon. More Nevoch, p. 2. c. xxviii. Madraſh. Cohel. f. 14. Aben-Ezra, Eccleſ. vii. 4. Hieron. in Eccleſ. xii. 12. Gemar in Pirke Abboth, f. 1. col. 1. Some abſurdly imagined, that Solomon maintained the eternity of the world, in ch. i. 4.

ſign of the author. But when they obſerved the excellent concluſion, and its conſiſtency with the law, they allowed its pretenſions. There can, indeed, be no doubt of its title to an admiſſion: Solomon was eminently diſtinguiſhed by the illumination of the divine ſpirit, and had even twice witneſſed the divine preſence [I]. The tendency of the book is excellent, when rightly underſtood, and Solomon ſpeaks in it with great clearneſs of the revealed truths of a future life, and univerſal judgment.

THE book is in the Hebrew denominated "Coheleth," a word which ſignifies one who ſpeaks in public [K]; and which, indeed, is properly tranſlated by the Greek word Eccleſiaſtes [L], or, the Preacher. Solomon, as Mr. Deſvoeux has remarked, ſeems here to ſpeak in a character ſimilar to that of the ſophiſts among the Greeks; not, indeed, of the ſophiſts when degenerated into ſubtle and quibbling wranglers, but of the ſophiſts who, in the dignity of their primitive character, blended philoſophy and rhetoric [M]; and made pleaſure ſubſervient to inſtruction, by conveying wiſdom with eloquence. Though Solomon is not hereby to be conſidered as having harangued,

[I] 1 Kings iii. 5. ix. 2. xi. 9.

[K] Some ſay, that the word Coheleth means a collector. In the Ethiopick tongue it implies a circle, or company of men.

[L] Ἐκκλησιαστης. The Hebrew word has, however, a feminine termination in reſpect to wiſdom, perſonified, as it were, in Solomon.

[M] Philoſtrat. ap. Muret. in Defin. II. Cicero Orat. c. xix.

like

like the common orators of his time, yet, as there can be no doubt that he often publickly inſtructed his own people, and even ſtrangers, who were drawn by his reputation for wiſdom to his court [N], it is not improbable that this diſcourſe was firſt delivered in publick; and, indeed, ſome paſſages have been produced from the book in ſupport of this opinion [O].

THE main ſcope and tendency of the book have been variouſly repreſented. Mr. Deſvoeux, after an accurate diſcuſſion of the different opinions, has pronounced it to be a philoſophical diſcourſe [P], written in a rhetorical ſtile, and occaſionally interſperſed with verſes [Q]. It may be conſidered as a kind of enquiry into the chief good; an enquiry conducted on ſound principles, and terminating in a concluſion which all, on mature reflection, will approve. The great object of Solomon appears to have been from a comprehenſive conſideration of the circumſtances of human life, to demonſtrate the vanity of all ſecular purſuits. He endeavours to illuſtrate by a juſt eſtimate, the inſufficiency of earthly enjoyment; not with deſign to excite in us a diſguſt at life [R], but to influence us to prepare for that ſtate where there

[N] Mercer. Præf. in Eccleſ.

[O] Chap. xii. 9, 12. Gregor. Mag. Lib. IV. Dial. c. iv.

[P] Deſvoeux Philoſophical and Critic. Eſſays on Eccleſ.

[Q] The Jews do not admit that Eccleſiaſtes ſhould be conſidered as a poetical work.

[R] The Manichæans, not conſidering that human purſuits are only ſo far vain as they terminate in a preſent object, maintained the exiſtence of an evil principle.

is no vanity [s]. With this view, the Preacher affirms, that man's labour, as far as it has reſpect only to preſent objects, is vain and unprofitable [t]; that however proſperous and flattering circumſtances may appear, yet as he could from experience aſſert, neither knowledge; nor pleaſure; nor magnificence; nor greatneſs; nor uncontrolled indulgence, can ſatisfy the deſires of man [u]; that the ſolicitude with which ſome men toil and heap up poſſeſſions for deſcendants often unworthy, is eſpecial vexation; that it is better far to derive ſuch enjoyment from the gifts of Providence, as they were deſigned to furniſh, by being rendered ſubſervient to good actions [x]; Solomon proceeds to obſerve, that in this life, "iniquity uſurps the place of righteouſneſs;" that man appears in ſome reſpects to have "no pre-eminence above the beaſt" that periſhes; and that

[s] Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, l. 20. c. iii. Hieron. Prol. in Eccles.

[t] Compare Eccleſ. i. 2. with Perſius, Sat. I. line 1.

[u] Gregor. Nyſſen. Hom. I. in Eccleſ. T. i. p. 375. Salen. Dial. in Eccleſ. Bib. Patav. in Eccleſ. tom. i. col. 147. Caſtal. Præf. in Eccleſ. Collyer's Sacred Interp. vol. i. p. 339. Prior's Solomon.

[x] Chap. iii. 12. Solomon recommends a moderate enjoyment of the good gifts of Providence, and thinks ſuch enjoyment more reaſonable than an inordinate purſuit after riches, or than thoſe labours from which no advantage ſhould reſult to ourſelves. Vid. Eccleſ. ii. 24. viii. 15. ix. 7—9. Acts xiv. 17. 1 Tim. iv. 1—4. Druſius in Eccleſ. i. 1. Geier. Prol. in Eccleſ. Horace Carm. Lib. II. Ode II. l. 1—4. And Wells's Help to the Underſtanding of the Holy Scriptures.

the

the conſideration of theſe circumſtances may at firſt ſight lead to wrong concluſions, concerning the value of life; but that God ſhould not be haſtily arraigned, for that "he that is higher than the higheſt, regardeth." That even here, thoſe who "pervert judgment," are not ſatisfied by abundance, "but that the ſleep of the labouring man is ſweet [Y]." That though the hearts of men be encouraged in evil by the delay of God's ſentence, and though the days of the ſinner may be prolonged on earth, yet that, finally, it ſhall be well only with them who fear God [Z]. Solomon then ſums up his exhortations to good deeds, and to a remembrance of the Creator in the days of youth, "or ever the ſilver cord of life be looſed, or the golden bowl be broken [A];" when "the duſt ſhall return to the earth, and the ſpirit unto God who gave it." And the inſpired teacher bids us "hear the concluſion of the whole matter," which is, "to fear God, and to keep his

[Y] Chap. iii.—vi.

[Z] Chap. viii. 11—13.

[A] Chap. xii. 5, 6. By the ſilver cord of which Solomon ſpeaks in this figurative deſcription of old age, ſome underſtand the humours of the body, which are, as it were, *the thread of life*. But the moſt judicious writers conſider it as an elegant expreſſion for the ſpinal marrow, with the nerves ariſing from it, and the filaments, fibres, and tendons that proceed from them. This white cord is looſened (or ſhrunk up) when it is no longer full of ſpirits. The golden bowl is ſuppoſed to mean the pia mater. This membrane, which covers the brain, is of a yellowiſh colour. For farther explanation of this beautiful allegory, conſult Commentators and Smith's γηροκομια βασιλικη.

commandments, for this is the whole of man; for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil [B]."

In the course of his discussion of this subject, Solomon deviates into some remarks incidentally suggested, in order to preclude objections, and to prevent false conclusions. It is therefore necessary always to keep in mind the purport and design of the discourse, which is carried on, not in a chain of re-

[B] De Sacy Avertis. sur l'Eccles. De Launey, sur l'Eccles. xii. 15. Hardouin Paraph. sur l'Eccles. Witsii. Præf. Miscel. Sac. c. xviii. § 36, 37. The whole force of Solomon's reasoning rests on the doctrine of a future judgment, as maintained in chap. xii. 13, 14. and before in chap. iii. 17. vii. 1, 12. xi. 9. He had admitted that as to this life, there was but "one event to the righteous and to the wicked," ch. ix. 1—3. The seven following verses in the ninth chapter are sometimes supposed to be spoken in the assumed character of an Epicurean. Compare chap. ix. 4—10. with Wisd. ii. 1—11. But Solomon might, consistently with the scope of his own discourse, maintain that the only hope of man is during life, and that in this respect, the most wretched being, *a living dog*, is better than the greatest monarch, *a dead lion*; for the living having the prospect of death, may prepare for it, but the dead have no more opportunity of purchasing a reward; that the gratification of their passions is then perished, and that they have no more a portion on earth. Hence Solomon proceeds to exhort to a discreet enjoyment, and to active exertion, for that wisdom would find no employment in the grave: that in this life there is no equal distribution, and that the time of departure from it is uncertain. Solomon concludes the chapter with a lively illustration of the final advantage, and deliverance to be produced by humble wisdom, however over-looked and despised in the present life. Vid. chap. ix. 4—18.

gular

gular deductions and logical conſequences, but in a popular and deſultory manner; and the connection of the reaſoning is often kept up by almoſt imperceptible links. It is neceſſary alſo to examine what Solomon ſtates as his firſt doubts and haſty thoughts, corrected by his cooler judgment; and to diſtinguiſh what he ſays for himſelf, from what he urges in an aſſumed character; for though the book be not, as ſome have imagined [c], a dialogue between a pious perſon and one of Sadducean principles; yet in the courſe of the work the Preacher ſtarts and anſwers objections; takes up the probable opinions, as it were, of an encircling croud; and ſometimes admits, by way of conceſſion, what he afterwards proves to be falſe [d]. We muſt be careful, therefore, not to extend thoſe principles which Solomon grants, beyond their due bounds, nor to underſtand them in a different ſenſe from that in which they are admitted by him. From want of due conſideration of theſe circumſtances and laws, the ſentiments of Solomon have often been perverted to countenance falſe and pernicious opinions [e]; and from want of

[c] Sentimens de quelques Theolog. ſur l'Hiſt. Crit. du P. R. Simon, Amſtel. 1682, Lett. XII. 272. F. Yeard's Paraphraſe on Eccleſ. Lond. 1701. Some writers maintain, that all theſe paſſages which are conſidered as objectionable, will admit of a good ſenſe in conſiſtency with Solomon's diſcourſe.

[d] Caſtal. Præf. in Eccleſ. Not. Philol. Adv. Script. Loc. in Eccleſ. iii. Dubardin. Reflect. Moral, ſur l'Eccleſ. Gregor. Mag. Dal. IV. c. iv.

[e] Witſius Miſcel. Sac. tom. i. p. 213. 226. B. Gerhard. in Exeges. Loc. de Scrip. p. 156. and Præf. in Com. T. iii. f. 231. Lowth's Prælect. Poet. 24.

attention

attention to the deſign of the book, as here deſcribed, ſome writers have had recourſe to very extraordinary means of reconciling particular paſſages with the main ſcope and pious concluſion of the work. Hence to vindicate it from any imputations of bad tendency, Olympiodorus maintained that Solomon ſpeaks only of natural things in the book, though he interſperſes a few moral ſentiments; and St. Auſtin endeavours to explain it by having recourſe to allegory; but ſuch ſolutions are not worthy of much attention; and what has been already ſaid will ſufficiently account for all difficulties that may occur in conſidering the work. We need not recollect, that the ſtile of the book is particularly obſcure and vague, though unornamented and proſaic; that the queſtion itſelf is embarraſſed with difficulties; and that the deſultory mode of argument is liable to be miſtaken, where various opinions are introduced; and when the author diverſifies his character, without accurately diſcriminating his ſerious from his ironical remarks, or objections from his anſwers. It muſt however be wilful deluſion, or perverſe ſophiſtry, which ſelects partial extracts for the encouragement of ſin, where the diſpaſſionate and rational enquirer after truth will find true wiſdom, and deliberate piety.

OF

OF THE

SONG OF SOLOMON.

THE Talmudiſts have attributed this Book to Hezekiah [A]; other writers have, with as little reaſon, aſſigned it to Iſaiah; and others to Ezra. There are, however, no grounds that ſhould influence us to reject the authority of the Hebrew title [B], which aſcribes it to Solomon; and, indeed, it is now almoſt univerſally allowed to have been the Epithalamium, or Marriage Song of that monarch [C], compoſed on the celebration of his nuptials with a very beautiful woman, called Shulamite, the

[A] Bava Bathra. R. Moſes Kimchi.

[B] The Chaldee Paraphraſe hath this title, "The Songs and Hymns which Solomon the Prophet, the King of Iſrael, uttered in the ſpirit of Prophecy before the Lord."

[C] Chap. i. 4. ii. 16. iii. 4, 7, 11. Vid. alſo, chap. viii. 5. where Michaelis, inſtead of "thy mother brought thee forth," reads, "thy mother betrothed thee." Vid. Not. in Lowth's Prælect. 30.

daughter,

daughter, as hath been ſuppoſed, of Pharaoh, and the favourite and diſtinguiſhed wife of Solomon [D].

SOLOMON was eminently ſkilful in the compoſition of ſongs, and he is related to have produced above a thouſand [E]; of which number, probably, this only was attributed to the ſuggeſtion of the ſacred

[D] 1 Kings iii. 1, 7. ix. 16—24. Cant. vi. 13. Cornel a Lapid. Prol. c. 1. Lightfoot's Chron. &c. p. 5. Harmer's Com. p. 27—44. Some imagine the bride to have been a Tyrian woman; others a native of Jeruſalem. Vid. ch. iii. 4—10. viii. 5. It is objected to the opinion of her being the daughter of Pharaoh, that the bride's mother is mentioned as at the court of Solomon; ch. iii. 4. viii. 2, 5. and that ſhe ſpeaks of a ſiſter unprovided for, ch. viii. 8. and of the poſſeſſion of a vineyard as her portion, ch. viii. 12. vid. Dr. Percy's new Tranſlat. of Sol. Song. Harmer, however, ſuppoſes a former wife of Solomon to ſpeak in the firſt inſtances, and that the vineyard mentioned was Gezer, which Pharaoh is ſaid in 1 Kings ix. 16, 17. to have "given for a preſent unto his daughter, Solomon's wife." The bride calls herſelf black, though ſhe repreſents her darkneſs as the conſequence of expoſure to the ſun; and Volney maintains, from a paſſage in Herodotus, and his own obſervation, that the ancient Egyptians were black. Voyage en Syrie et Egypt, vol. i. p. 175. If a Gentile woman, ſhe was more appoſitely a figure of the Gentile church; and Patrick has elegantly remarked, that as the word *Shehora* denotes that duſkineſs which precedes the morning dawn, it may figuratively repreſent the Gentile darkneſs which diſperſed before the riſing of the Goſpel light. The word Shulamite is, perhaps, derived from that of Solomon. Vid. R. Jonathan in Talkut. ad 1. Raam iii. fol. 28. col. 3.

[E] 1 Kings iv. 32. Eccleſ. xlvii. 17. In the Septuagint they are ſaid to have been 5000.

ſpirit,

ſpirit, for this only has eſcaped the waſte of time [F], by being preſerved in the conſecrated volume of the ſcriptures; into which it was received as unqueſtionably authentic; and it has ſince been uniformly conſidered as canonical by the chriſtian church.

The royal author appears in the typical ſpirit of his time, to have deſigned to render a ceremonial appointment deſcriptive of a ſpiritual concern; and biſhop Lowth has judiciouſly determined, that the ſong is a myſtical allegory; of that ſort which induces a more ſublime ſenſe on hiſtorical truths, and which by the deſcription of human events, ſhadows out divine circumſtances [G]. The ſacred writers were, by God's condeſcenſion, authoriſed to illuſtrate his ſtrict and intimate relation to the church by the figure of a marriage: and the emblem muſt have been ſtrikingly becoming, and expreſſive to the conceptions of the Jews, ſince they annexed ideas of peculiar myſtery to this appointment, and imagined that the marriage union was a counterpart repreſentation of ſome original pattern in heaven. Hence

[F] Except, perhaps, ſome received into the Book of Pſalms, as poſſibly the cxxviith. cxxviii. and cxxxii. Vid. Patrick.

[G] Lowth's Præl. Poet. 31. Some have conceived it to be entirely ſpiritual. Vid. Calouv. p. 12, 53. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. VII. cap. xx. Bernard Serm. I. in Cant. p. 748. Glaſs. Philol. Sac. Lib. V. cap. xx. But it apparently had a reference to an actual marriage. The book is full of elegant alluſions to the circumſtances of the marriage ceremony among the Jews. There are ſome particulars which apply only to the literal ſenſe, as there are others which correſpond only with the figurative interpretation.

was

was it celebrated among them with very peculiar ceremonies and ſolemnity; with every thing that could give dignity and importance to its rites [H]. Solomon, therefore, in celebrating the circumſtances of his marriage, was naturally led by a chain of correſpondent reflections, to conſider that ſpiritual connection which it was often employed to ſymbolize; and the idea muſt have been more forcibly ſuggeſted to him, as he was at this period preparing to build a temple to God, and thereby to furniſh a viſible repreſentation of the Hebrew church.

If this account be admitted, there is no reaſon why we ſhould not ſuppoſe that the Holy Spirit might have aſſiſted Solomon to render this ſpiritual allegory prophetic of that future connection which was to ſubſiſt with more immediate intercourſe between Chriſt and the church, which he ſhould perſonally conſecrate as his bride. If the predominant idea which operated on the mind of Solomon, were only that affinity which at all times was ſuppoſed to ſubſiſt between God and the Hebrew church; yet as that church was itſelf the type of a more perfect eſtabliſhment, the deſcriptive repreſentation of Solomon had neceſſarily a prophetic character; and the ſacred ſpirit ſeems to have often ſuggeſted alluſions and expreſſions more adapted to the ſecond, than to the firſt eſtabliſhment. Whether the ſong, however, were typically or directly prophetic, it is unqueſtion-

[H] Cudworth's Tipheret. and Malcuth and Patrick's Preface. Selden. Uxor. Heb. Buxtorf. &c.

able

able that this elegant compoſition had a predictive, as well as a figurative character. The whole of it is a thin veil of allegory thrown over a ſpiritual alliance; and we diſcover every where through the tranſparent types of Solomon and his bride, the characters of Chriſt, and his perſonified church; pourtrayed with thoſe graces and embelliſhments which are moſt lovely and engaging to the human eye.

This ſpiritual allegory, thus worked up by Solomon to its higheſt perfection, was very conſiſtent with the prophetic ſtile, which was accuſtomed to predict evangelical bleſſings by ſuch parabolical figures; and Solomon was more immediately furniſhed with a pattern for this alluſive repreſentation by the author of the forty-fifth Pſalm, who deſcribes in a compendious allegory, the ſame future connection between Chriſt and his church [I].

It was the want of ſufficient attention to this character in the Song of Solomon, which is, perhaps, the moſt figurative part of ſcripture, that firſt induced the rabbinical writers to diſpute its authority, in contradiction to the ſentiments of the earlier Jews, who never queſtioned its title to a place in the canon [K]. It muſt likewiſe have been a perverſe diſregard to

[I] The forty-fifth Pſalm was poſſibly written on the occaſion of Solomon's marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh.

[K] Though not expreſsly mentioned by Philo, or Joſephus, it muſt have been one of the twenty-two books, reckoned as canonical by the latter. It was in the earlieſt catalogues of the ſacred books received by the chriſtian church, in that of Melito, in his letter written to Oneſimus, about A. D. 140, in

to its ſpiritual import, which has occaſioned even ſome chriſtian authors to conſider it with a very unbecoming and irreverent freedom [L]. It has been weakly objected, by thoſe who would invalidate its pretenſions, that the name of God is not mentioned throughout the work; but this obſervation muſt have ariſen from want of reflection on the deſign of the author, which was to adumbrate divine inſtruction, and not directly to inculcate what other parts of ſcripture ſo forcibly deſcribe. There is, in fact, no reaſon to queſtion its pretenſions to be conſidered as an inſpired book ſince it was indiſputably in the Hebrew canon; and is ſeemingly referred to, if not abſolutely cited by Chriſt and his apoſtles [M], who as well as the ſacred writers of the Old Teſtament [N], take up its ideas, and purſue its allegory [O].

But though the work be certainly an allegorical repreſentation, it muſt be confeſſed, that many learned men, in an unreſtrained eagerneſs to explain the

in Origen's catalogue. Vid. Euſeb. Hiſt. Lib. IV. cap. xxvi. Lib. VI. cap. xxv. and in the canon received by the council of Laodicea, can. 59.

[L] As Grotius, and even the learned Michaelis, who has certainly given too much ſcope to fancy in his remarks on this book. Vid. Not. in Lowth's Prælect. 30.

[M] Comp. Cant. iv. 7. with Epheſ. v. 27. Cant. viii. 11. with Matt. xxi. 33. Cant. i. 4. with John vi. 44. Cant. v. 2. with Revel. iii. 20. Cant. vii. 1. with Iſaiah lii. 7.

[N] Iſaiah liv. 5. lxi. 10. lxii. 4, 5. Ezek. xvi. and xxiii. Hoſ. ii. 16, 19. and Prophets, paſſim.

[O] Matt. ix. 15. xxii. 2, 25. John iii. 29. 2 Cor. xi. 2. Gal. iv. 22—31. Epheſ. v. 23—27. Revel. xix. 7. xxii. 17.

ſong,

ſong, even in its minuteſt and moſt obſcure particulars, have too far indulged their imaginations; and by endeavouring too nicely to reconcile the literal with the ſpiritual ſenſe, have been led beyond the boundaries which a reverence for the ſacred writings ſhould ever preſcribe. The ideas which the inſpired writers furniſh concerning the myſtical relation between Chriſt and his church, though well accommodated to our apprehenſions, by the alluſion of a marriage union, are too general to illuſtrate every particular contained in this poem; which may be ſuppoſed to have been intentionally decorated with ſome ornaments appropriate to the literal conſtruction. When the general analogy is obvious, we are not always to expect minute reſemblance, and ſhould not be too curious in ſeeking for obſcure and recondite alluſions. The Jews prudently forbad their children to read it till their judgment was matured [P], leſt in the fervor of youth they ſhould give too wide a ſcope to fancy, and interpret to a bad ſenſe the ſpiritual ideas of Solomon. The book, though placed laſt in order of his works, appear to have been written by that monarch in his youth: in the full warmth of a luxuriant imagination [Q]. Solomon, in the glow of an inſpired fancy, and unſuſpicious of miſconception, or deliberate perverſion, deſcribes

[P] And the ſame reſtriction prevailed in the primitive chriſtian church. Vid. Origen. Præf. in Cant. Hieron. in Ezech. Theodor. Oper. tom. i. p. 198. Wolf. Bib. Hebr. p. 126.

[Q] Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter towards the beginning of his reign. Vid. 1 Kings iii. 1.

God and his church, with their reſpective attributes and graces, under colourings, familiar and agreeable to mankind; and exhibits their ardent affection under the authoriſed figures of earthly love. No ſimilitude, indeed, could be choſen ſo elegant and appoſite for the illuſtration of this intimate and ſpiritual alliance, as the marriage union; if conſidered in the chaſte ſimplicity of its firſt inſtitution; or under the intereſting circumſtances with which it was eſtabliſhed among the Jews [R].

Those who imagine that Solomon has introduced into this hymeneal ſong ſome ideas inconſiſtent with the refinement of a ſpiritual allegory, do not ſufficiently conſider that the ſtrongeſt affections of the mind, if properly directed, are chaſte and honourable. The reciprocal deſcription of the bridegroom and bride; and the impaſſioned language in which they expreſs their mutual attachment, are compatible with the ſtricteſt purity of conception; and they are employed to repreſent reſpectively, ſpiritual perfections, and ſpiritual paſſions, with the greateſt propriety. The figures and expreſſions of Solomon have, indeed, loſt their original dignity and decorum, becauſe they have in later times been often abuſed to a fulſome and depraved ſenſe. The judicious reader will, however, carefully diſcriminate between the genuine import of language, and its perverted application. The ſentiments, likewiſe, of Solomon,

[R] Calmet. Diſſert. ſur les Mariages des Hebreux. See alſo Sir William Jones's Diſſert. on the myſtical Poetry of the Perſian and the Hindus. Aſiat. Reſearch. Vol. III.

were unqueſtionably chaſtened with that reſerve and delicacy which, among the Jews, was attached to the conſideration of the marriage union; and the book does not appear to contain any alluſions offenſive to that character of the inſtitution which rendered it an apt repreſentation of the ſacred connection.

THIS book may be conſidered as to its form, as a dramatical poem [s], of the paſtoral kind. There is a ſucceſſion of time, and a change of place, to different parts of the palace and royal gardens. The perſonages introduced as ſpeakers, are the bridegroom and bride, with their reſpective attendants, together, as ſome ſuppoſe, with the ſiſter of the bride [t]; and, if the ingenious theory of Harmer be admitted, the firſt and degraded wife of Solomon [u], whom he conſiders as the figure of the Jewiſh church. There is certainly an interchange of dialogue, carried on in a wild and digreſſive man-

[s] Origen. ap. Hieron. tom. vii. fol. 63. Greg. Nazianz. Orat. cxxxi. p. 503.

[t] If the bride herſelf be conſidered as the figure of the chriſtian church, the ſiſter may be ſuppoſed to repreſent any younger church riſing under its protection. The bridegroom, when conſulted upon what ſhould be done for this ſiſter, gives a figurative account of the meaſures which ſhould be taken to preſerve her purity and ſafety. Some attribute the tenth verſe to the bride; and ſome to the ſiſter, profeſſing to have derived ſtrength from the countenance of the bridegroom. Vid. chap. viii. 8—10.

[u] Chap. ii. 5. iii. 1. Harm. Com. p. 44, &c.

ner, and the ſpeeches are characteriſtic, and adapted to the perſons with appropriate elegance. The companions of the bride compoſe a kind of chorus, which ſeems to bear ſome reſemblance to that which afterwards obtained in the Grecian tragedy [x]. Solomon and his Queen ſometimes ſpeak in aſſumed characters, and repreſent themſelves in fictitious circumſtances. They deſcend, as it were, from the throne; and adopt with the paſtoral dreſs, that ſimplicity of ſtile which is favourable to the communication of their ſentiments [y]. The ſtile, however, is not more ſimple than elegant. The poem, indeed, abounds throughout with beauties, and preſents every

[x] The original chorus of the Greeks, which was the foundation on which their drama was built, was an inſtitution of a religious character; and it might poſſibly have been derived from an intimation of ſome ſacred appointment among the Jews, whoſe ſingers in the temple ſervice compoſed a ſort of chorus.

[y] This book was certainly known to Theocritus, who was a contemporary with the Septuagint tranſlators; and who might have been made acquainted with it by Ptolemy Philadelphus, whoſe patronage and regard for literature the poet celebrates. It is evident that many expreſſions, images, and ſentiments, in the Idyllia, are copied from the ſacred poem. Comp. Cant. i. 9. with Theoc. xviii. 30. Cant. vi. 10. with Theoc. xviii. 26. Cant. iv. 11. with Theoc. xx. 26, 27. Cant. iv. 15. with Theoc. i. 7, 8. Cant. ii. 15. with Theoc. i. 48, 49. Cant. i. 7. with Theoc. ii. 69. Cant. v. 2. with Theoc. ii. 127. Cant. viii. 6, 7. with Theoc. ii. 133, 134. and Theoc. vii. 56. Cant. ii. 8, 9. with Theoc. viii. 88, 89. Cant. viii. 7. with Theoc. xxiii. 25, 26. Vid. Weſley in Job, Diſſ. IV.

where

where a delightful and romantic diſplay of nature, painted at its moſt intereſting ſeaſon with [z] all the enthuſiaſm of poetry, and deſcribed with every ornament that an inventive fancy could furniſh. The images that embelliſh it, are chiefly drawn from that ſtate of paſtoral life in which the Jews were much occupied; and to which Solomon, mindful of his father's condition, muſt have looked with peculiar fondneſs. It is juſtly entitled "a ſong of ſongs," or moſt excellent ſong; as ſuperior to any compoſition that an uninſpired writer could ever have produced; a ſong which, if properly underſtood, muſt tend to purify the mind, and to elevate the affections from earthly to heavenly things. The book is certainly compoſed with metrical arrangement. The Jews admit its title to be conſidered as a poem, though not, indeed, on account of its ſtructure or meaſure, but becauſe they regard it as a parable which, according to Abarbinel, conſtitutes one ſpecies of the canticle or ſong [A].

THERE

[z] Harmer, from a conſideration of the ſcenery here deſcribed, ſuppoſes the marriage to have been celebrated in the ſpring, when "the tender grape" began to appear, towards the latter end of April. See Com. p. 154, 155.

[A] The Maſoretic writers, who ſeem to have been but little acquainted with the nature of the ancient Hebrew meaſure, admitted that the Pſalms, Proverbs, and Job, were metrical, and marked them particularly as ſuch. But other books, equally metrical, as the Canticles, and the Lamentations, they noted with proſaic accentuation; and the Jews

THERE have been many different diviſions of the book; ſome conceive that it naturally breaks out into ſeven parts; and the learned Boſſuet has obſerved, that it deſcribes the ſeven days which the nuptial ceremony [B], (as, indeed, almoſt all ſolemnities among the Jews) laſted, during which time ſelect virgins attended the bride, as the bridegroom was accompanied by his choſen friends [C].

BOSSUET's diſtribution of the work is as follows [D].

The firſt day,	chap. i.		—— ii.	6.
ſecond day,	chap. ii.	7.	——	17.
third day,	chap. iii.		—— v.	1.
fourth day,	chap. v.	2.	—— vi.	9.
fifth day,	chap. vi.	10.	—— vii.	11.
ſixth day,	chap. vii.	12.	—— viii.	3.
ſeventh day,	chap. viii.	4.	——	14.

BOSSUET ſuppoſes the ſeventh day to be the ſabbath, becauſe the bridegroom is not repreſented as

conſider theſe books as profaic compoſitions. Vid. Mantiſſa. Diſſ. ad Lib. Coſri, p. 413.

[B] Gen. xxix. 27. Judg. xiv. 15, 17. Tobit viii. 19, 20.

[C] Cant. i. 4. ii. 7. v. 1. Judg. xiv. 11. Pſalm xlv. 14. Matt. ix. 15. xxv. 1. John iii. 29. The friends of the bridegroom may be conſidered as the repreſentatives of angels, prophets, and apoſtles; and the friends of the bride are figurative, perhaps, of the followers of the church. They are called the daughters of Jeruſalem.

[D] Boſſuet's Præf. et Con. in Cant. and New Tranſ. of Solomon's Song: the learned author of which characterizes the ſeven days by a different diviſion.

going

going out to his uſual occupations. This diviſion is at leaſt probable, as it throws ſome light on the book. Some have conceived [E], that theſe periods are figurative of ſeven analogous and correſpondent ages that may be ſuppoſed to extend from Chriſt to the end of the world: which is a very unauthoriſed conjecture, and juſtly rejected by the moſt judicious commentators.

[E] As Coccius.

GENERAL PREFACE

TO THE

PROPHETS.

THE ſecond of thoſe great diviſions under which the Jews claſſed the books of the Old Teſtament was that of the Prophets [A]. This, as has been before obſerved [B], comprehended originally thirteen books; but the Talmudical doctors [C] rejecting Ruth, Job, Lamentations, Daniel, Eſther, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Chronicles, as hagiographical, reckon only eight prophetical books; calling thoſe of Joſhua, of Judges, of Samuel, and of Kings, the four books of the former Prophets; and thoſe of Iſaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve leſſer Prophets (comprized into one) as the four books of the later Prophets; by which means they deprive ſome books of a rank to which they are entitled; and by parting Ruth, Nehemiah, and Lamentations,

[A] Joſeph. cont. Apion. Lib. I.
[B] Introduct. p. 10.
[C] Bava Bathra, c. i.

from

from the books to which they were ſeverally united, enlarge the catalogue of their canonical books. As the rabbinical notions concerning the degrees of inſpiration cannot be allowed to affect the dignity of any of the ſacred writings [D]; and as the pretenſions of every book are ſeverally conſidered in a ſeparate chapter, it is unneceſſary to examine the propriety of ſuch an arrangement in this preface; in which it is deſigned to treat in a general way, of the character of the Prophets, and of the nature and evidence of that inſpiration, under the influence of which they wrote [E].

The Prophets were thoſe illuſtrious perſons who were raiſed up by God among the Iſraelites, as the miniſters of his diſpenſations. They flouriſhed in a continued ſucceſſion for above a thouſand years [F]; all co-operating in the ſame deſigns, and conſpiring in one ſpirit to deliver the ſame doctrines, and to propheſy concerning the ſame future bleſſings. Moſes, the firſt and greateſt of the Prophets, having eſtabliſhed God's firſt covenant; thoſe who followed him were employed in explaining its nature; in opening its ſpiritual meaning; in inſtructing the Jews; and in preparing them for the reception of that ſecond diſpenſation [G] which it prefigured. Their preten-

[D] Glaſſius Diſput. I. in Pſalm cx.

[E] Introduction, p. 10.

[F] Luke i. 70. reckoning from Moſes to Malachi.

[G] Matt. xi. 13. 1 Macc. iv. 46. Coſri. Maam. iii. §. 39. Maſſec. Sotah, cap. ult. Maimon. Bartiner. Gem. Sanh. cap. i. §. 3.

ſions

fions to be conſidered as God's appointed ſervants, were demonſtrated by the unimpeachable integrity of their characters; by the intrinſic excellence and tendency of their inſtruction [H]; and by the diſintereſted zeal, and undaunted fortitude [I], with which they perſevered in their great deſigns. Theſe were ſtill farther confirmed by the miraculous proofs which they diſplayed of divine ſupport [K], and by the immediate completion of manyleſs importantpredictions which they uttered [L]. Such were the credentials of their exalted character, which the Prophets furniſhed to their contemporaries; and we, who having lived to witneſs the appearance of the ſecond diſpenſation, can look back to the connection which ſubſiſted between the two covenants, have received additional evidence of the inſpiration of the Prophets, in the atteſtations of our Saviour and his apoſtles [M]; and in the retroſpect of a germinant and gradually maturing ſcheme of prophecy, connected in all its parts, and ratified in the accompliſhment of its great object, the advent of the Meſſiah. We have ſtill farther incontrovertible proof of their divine appointment, in the numerous prophecies which in theſe later days are fulfilled, and ſtill under our own eyes continue to receive their completion.

[H] Deut. xiii. 1—3.

[I] Origen. cont. Celſ. Lib. VII. p. 336. edit. Cant.

[K] Joſh. x. 13. 1 Sam. xii. 18. 2 Kings i. 10. Iſa. xxxviii. 8.

[L] Deut. xviii. 22. 1 Sam. ix. 6. 1 Kings xiii. 3. Iſaiah xlii. 9. Jerem. xxviii. 9. Ezek. xxxiii. 33.

[M] Luke i. 70. xviii. 31. Acts vii. 42. xxiv. 14. Rom. xvi. 26. Epheſ. ii. 20. 2 Pet. i. 21.

THOUGH

THOUGH many perſons are mentioned in ſcripture as Prophets, and the Talmudiſts reckon up fifty-five [N], whom they conceive to have been entitled to this diſtinction, we are concerned only with thoſe whoſe books have been admitted into the canon; who are eminently ſtiled Prophets [O], as they were unqueſtionably inſpired with the knowledge of future events; whoſe writings have been preſerved for the permanent advantage of the church, as deſcriptive of the œconomy of the divine government, as fraught with the leſſons of revealed wiſdom, and as bearing inconteſtible evidence to the truth and pretenſions of the chriſtian religion.

THE nature and character of that inſpiration by which the Prophets were enabled to communicate divine inſtructions and predictions, has been the ſubject of much diſquiſition. With reſpect to the mode by which the Holy Spirit might operate on the underſtanding of its agents, when employed in the compoſition of ſacred writ, we can form no preciſe ideas, as we have no acquired experience to aſſiſt our conceptions; we can judge of it only by its effects, for of the inviſible agency of a divine power we can

[N] Including ſeven propheteſſes. Vid. Gem. Maſſ. Megil.

[O] Προφήτης, Propheta, from Προ-φάω, a Προφημι, to foretel. The ſacred writers applied the word נביא, Nabia, with great latitude, as well to falſe prophets, as to thoſe idolatrous prieſts whom they called prophets of the grove. Vide 1 Kings xviii. 19, 22. It appears, likewiſe, to have been ſometimes uſed in the ſame looſe ſenſe as Προφητης is employed by St. Paul ſynonimouſly with the Latin word Vates, a muſician or poet. Vid. 1 Tit. i. 12. Selden, de Diis Syris Syntag. ii. c. iii. Maimon. More Nevoch, P. III. c. xxix.

have

have no adequate apprehenſion. There is cauſe, however, to ſuppoſe that the ſpirit operated chiefly on the reaſoning faculties of the mind, however the imagination might be kindled by its influence. It appears rather to have enlightened the intellect than to have inflamed the fancy [P]. The Prophets themſelves, as men, neither viſionary nor enthuſiaſtic in their previous character, as not acting under the bias of any gloomy or ſuperſtitious notions, could not have been liable to be deceived by the deluſions of a clouded or intemperate imagination [Q]. They muſt themſelves, by the ſtrong effects of the divine impulſe, have been ſenſible of a ſupernatural control, and they muſt have been capable of deciding on its character by the clear and diſtinct impreſſions which they received. They muſt have been convinced of their own inſpiration by the diſcoveries of an enlightened mind, as well as by that ſpontaneous and unwonted facility with which they delivered their important convictions. And the people had a criterion to judge of the truth of their pretenſions, ſince if the ſigns of immediate accompliſhment, which they uttered, were not fulfilled; or if their inſtructions were delivered in the name of falſe divinities, they were to be rejected [R].

As to the extent of this inſpiration, and whether we are to conſider it as general or reſtricted, it muſt be remarked, that as it would be abſurd to ſuppoſe that the ſpirit guided the Prophets only by occaſional

[P] Maimon. More Nevoch, P. II. c. xxxvi.
[Q] Geom. Schab. Zohar. col. 408.
[R] Deut. xiii. 1—3. xviii. 18—22.

and

and defultory ſtarts, and partially enlightened them by imperfect communications, ſo we cannot but admit them to have been uniformly under its influence; and in conſequence, to have been invariably preſerved from deception and error, when engaged in the compoſition of the ſacred books. The ſpirit did not certainly deprive them of the uſe of their faculties ſo as to render them the mere inſtruments of conveying the voice of God; but it ſuperintended and guided them in the exerciſe of their own underſtandings; ſometimes inſtructing them by immediate revelation, and ſometimes directing them in the communication of that knowledge which they had derived from the ordinary ſources of intelligence [s].

We are authoriſed, it is true, in the ſcripture, to conclude, that the Holy Ghoſt (who, in his appropriate character, was more immediately an agent in communicating inſpiration) [t], did, indeed, "ſpeak by the Prophets;" but we are not, therefore, to conſider the ſpirit of inſpiration as one perſon of the ever-glorious Trinity, dictating to the ſacred writers every ſentence and expreſſion of ſcripture; but rather as a gift of God, a divine influence which opened their underſtandings to a diſcernment of the will of God. This miraculous power may be repreſented to our conceptions, as to its effects, under different points of view; it may be deſcribed firſt, as analogous to a light ſhining on the minds of the Prophets, and diſperſing thoſe miſts, which the corruption of hu-

[s] Secker's firſt ſermon on the inſpiration of Scripture.

[t] Mark xii. 36. Acts i. 16. xxviii. 25. Heb. iii. 7. ix. 8. 2 Pet. i. 21.

man

man nature had engendered; which enabled them to read thoſe natural principles that were originally engraven on the mind; which awakened their faculties to a more lively perception of truth, and aſſiſted their reaſon to act as free from prejudice and reſtraint. It muſt be conſidered ſtill farther, as inſtructing them by an influx of divine knowledge, in thoſe truths which could be obtained only by immediate information from God; or under one collective deſcription, it may be repreſented as guiding and conducting the Prophets, by various means, to the knowledge of all truth, human and divine. When they wrote hiſtorically, there could be no neceſſity for a revelation of thoſe events of which the knowledge might be obtained by their own obſervation, and enquiries [v]. They recorded what they themſelves had ſeen, or on ſome occaſions, what they had received from unqueſtionable documents, or credible witneſſes, the ſpirit, indeed, bearing teſtimony. The Prophets generally take care themſelves to inform us what they derived immediately from God; and to diſtinguiſh what they ſpeak in their own characters as recording hiſtorical events, or even as reaſoning from the doctrines which had been revealed unto them. Still however it is not inconſiſtent to maintain, that they wrote under the influence

[v] The Prophets were, however, ſometimes enabled to deſcribe paſt events by immediate revelation; and the word prophecy is applied to the diſcovery of paſt circumſtances obtained by ſupernatural means. Vid. 1 Sam. ix. 20. 2 Kings v. 25, 26. Matt. xxvi. 6. Huet. Deſm. IV. Witſius de Prophet. Lib. I. cap. ii.

of

of uniform inſpiration; that is, they were uniformly guided by a divine ſpirit, which enabled them by various means of intelligence to diſcover truth; and to ſelect and record with ſincerity what might be conſiſtent with their deſigns. And whenever they communicate divine inſtruction concerning the attributes and deſigns of God, deſcribing particulars which could not be the objects of human ſagacity or memory, they muſt have derived their knowledge by poſitive revelation from above [u].

Divine revelations were obtained by various ways; for without dilating on the internal irradiation above-mentioned, and without following the Jewiſh writers [x] in their diſtinctions concerning the different degrees of inſpiration which aſſiſted the authors in the compoſition of the prophetical or hagiographical books reſpectively [y], we may obſerve, in agreement with the accounts of ſcripture, that though the divine revelations were all equally infallible, yet that a greater degree of illumination was

[u] Stackhouſe's Preface to the Hiſt. of Bible, p. 26.

[x] The moſt learned Jews admit three degrees of Inſpiration. 1. The Gradus Moſaicus. 2. That which is peculiarly called Prophecy, and which was obtained by dreams and viſions. And 3. That which they call Ruach Hakkodeſh, by which they ſuppoſe the Hagiographi to have been inſpired. The Jewiſh notions, however, though ſometimes juſt, are generally very fanciful. Vid. Maimon. More Nevoch, P. II. c. xlv.

[y] Abarbin. in Eſaiah, ch. iv. Maimon. de Fund. Leg. c. vii.

imparted

imparted to ſome perſons than to others [z]; and that this conferred a proportionate dignity on the Prophet ſo favoured. The more important communications were likewiſe ſometimes furniſhed with more conſpicuous evidence of revelation, as the diſpenſation imparted to Moſes was introduced with a correſpondent diſplay, and ſuperior ſolemnity. The predictions of Moſes were not more certainly fulfilled than thoſe uttered by Iſaiah, yet is the former perſonage poſitively declared in ſcripture to have been honoured by an higher revelation in the expreſſion of having converſed with God "face to face [A]," than was Iſaiah, or any ſubſequent Prophet, whoſe illumination was obtained from dreams or viſions.

THE revelations which are related in ſcripture to have been communicated to the Patriarchs, ſometimes without any ſpecification of an intermediate agent, and ſometimes by the miniſtry of angels, have been frequently ſuppoſed to have been conveyed in dreams and viſions, without any actual appearance. But certainly ſome of the relations reſpecting theſe, cannot but be underſtood in a real and hiſtorical ſenſe; as that, for inſtance, in which God is deſcribed as having addreſſed Adam in Paradiſe [B]; and that in which the angels are repreſented to have appeared to, and to have converſed with Abra-

[z] Numb. xii. 8. Deut. xxxiv. 10. 2 Kings ii. 9. Heb. i. 1.

[A] Exod. xxxiii. 11.

[B] Gen. iii. 8.

ham;

ham [c]; in both of which, as well as in ſome other caſes [d], it muſt be admitted that the abſolute appearance of ſome divine perſonage, the Deity, or his angelical repreſentative, is intended in a ſtrict and poſitive ſenſe; as it ſhould ſeem, likewiſe, that God ſometimes addreſſed his ſervants by a voice from heaven [e], without any viſible manifeſtation of himſelf or his angel.

[c] Gen. xviii. alſo Gen. xvii. 1—3. It is probable, that wherever God is ſaid to have appeared, it is to be underſtood that he appeared by ſome meſſenger, the repreſentative of the divine Majeſty, and authoriſed to ſpeak in God's name; this may be collected from John i. 18. and v. 37. Vid. Gen. xvi. 7, 13. xxii. 1, 11. Judges vi. 11—23. and other places, where the Lord and the angel are words interchangeably uſed. Vid. Auguſt. de Trinit. c. xi. It was univerſally believed in the ancient church, that all thoſe divine appearances deſcribed in the Old Teſtament, whether actual or in viſion, were made by the Logos, or ſecond perſon of the Trinity. Comp. Iſaiah vi. 1. with John xii. 41. Vid. Bull's Defenſ. Fid. Nic. c. i. ſect. 1. The ancient Jews, likewiſe, ſuppoſed that the intended Meſſiah appeared as the repreſentative of Jehovah. Vid. Allix. Judg. of Jews church, ch. xiii. xiv. xv. Juſt. Mart. Dialog. 249—266, 408. edit. Thirlb.

[d] Numb. xxii. 22—35.

[e] Gen. xxii. 11. Exod. xx. 22. Deut. iv. 12. This mode of revelation was called by the Jews בת קול, Bath. Col. Filia Vocis, the daughter Voice, or daughter of a voice, becauſe when a voice or thunder came out of heaven, another voice came out of it. It is by them ſuppoſed to have ſucceeded prophecy, and to have conveyed inſtruction after the death of Malachi. It certainly diſtinguiſhed the dawn of the Goſpel diſpenſation. Vid. Matt. iii. 17. xvii. 5. John xii. 28, 29. Pirke R. Eliezer, c. xliv. Joſeph. Archæol. Lib. XIII. c. xviii, and Lightfoot in Matt. iii. 17.

When communications were obtained from an abſolute converſe with the Deity, every particular contained in them, muſt have been preciſely and diſtinctly revealed. And hence the inſtructions imparted to Moſes were ſo remarkably perſpicuous and explicit. No ſucceeding Prophet under the Jewiſh diſpenſation could, indeed, boaſt of ſo intimate and unreſerved a correſpondence with the Deity as that illuſtrious Legiſlator enjoyed; though unqueſtionably ſome were favoured with divine revelations imparted by the miniſtry of angels; who ſeem, from the accounts of ſcripture, abſolutely to have appeared and converſed with them [F]; notwithſtanding the Jewiſh writers conſider all theſe relations as deſcriptive of viſionary repreſentations; maintaining that God comprehended in his addreſs to Aaron and Miriam, every mode of revelation by which he deſigned to enlighten the Prophets that ſhould ſucceed to Moſes [G].

The inſtitution of the Urim and Thummim, which was coeval with the time of Moſes [H], furniſhed the means of obtaining divine information to his contemporaries, as well as to Joſhua, and others who ſucceeded him, till the building of the temple, or poſſibly till the captivity [I]. As we know not in what

[F] Joſhua v. 13—15. Judges xiii. 3, 13—20. Job xxxviii. 1.

[G] Numb. xii. 6. Maimon. More Nevoch. P. II. c. xli.

[H] Exod. xxviii. 33. Numb. xxvii. 21. Mede's Diſcourſe xxxv.

[I] It is uncertain when the conſultation by the Urim and Thummim ceaſed. Some think that it was appropriate to the theocracy;

what manner this myſterious ornament contributed to procure divine inſtruction: whether, as ſome have ſuppoſed, it furniſhed intelligence by the brilliancy and configuration of its inſcribed characters; or whether, as is moſt probable, it was the conſecrated means appointed for the attainment of anſwers by an audible voice [K], we are ſtill certain from the nature and verity of that information, as given upon important occaſions, that like all other modes of divine revelation under the Jewiſh œconomy, it was clear and perſpicuous. As far as it was deſigned to inſtruct the people in public concerns, it conveyed preciſe directions; and its predictions of future proſperity or puniſhment were delivered, not like thoſe of the Pagan oracles, in ambiguous and equivocal language, but in appropriate and expreſs declarations. It is certain, alſo, that independently of, or in conjunction with, thoſe communications which the high-prieſt obtained by the Urim and Thummim, God did furniſh inſtruction to others by an articulate voice, which proceeded from between the two cherubims above the mercy ſeat, in the Tabernacle [L]; in a manner alluſive poſſibly to the circumſtance of God's ſpeaking by angels.

THE other modes by which God vouchſafed to re-

theocracy; ſome imagine that it ſtopped after the building of the temple. It continued poſſibly till the deſtruction of the temple, and it was expected to revive after the captivity; Ezra ii. 36. Nehem. vii. 65. though probably it did not.

[K] Judges i. 1. 2 Sam. v. 23, 24.

[L] Exod. xxv. 22. Levit. i. 1. Numb. vii. 89. ix. 9. 1 Sam. iii. 3. and following verſes.

veal his inſtructions to the Prophets, were thoſe of dreams and viſions [M]. With reſpect to dreams, they were ſometimes imparted as admonitions from God to perſons who had no title to the prophetic character [N]. In theſe caſes they were doubtleſs leſs diſtinct in their impreſſion, and rather calculated to ſtrike and amaze, than to enlighten the mind. Thoſe who received them either waited their explication in the event, or applied for their interpretation to perſons who were endued with a portion of the divine ſpirit: and the power of explaining dreams appears to have been an eminent characteriſtic of the Prophets [O].

The dreams which revealed future ſcenes to the imaginations of the Prophets were doubtleſs very forcible, and evidently predictive. They are ſuppoſed by the Jews to have been introduced by the immediate efficiency of an angel, who either addreſſed the Prophets by a voice, or pictured narrative circumſtances to their minds: but however it might vary in its circumſtances, this mode of communication by dreams muſt have always conveyed very diſtinct impreſſions. When no voice was heard, and information was to be collected from ſome paraboli-

[M] It is remarkable, that Homer enumerates three modes of obtaining divine communications, which correſpond with thoſe appointed for the conveyance of revelations to God's ſelected people. Vid. Iliad, Lib. I. l. 62, 63.

[N] Maimon. More Nevoch, Par. II. c. xli. Philo Judæ. περι τȣ θεοπεμπτȣς ειναι ονειρȣς. Gemariſts in Baruchoth. c. ix. Gen. xl. Dan. iv.

[O] Jerem. xxiii. 28.

cal

cal ſcenes, the dreams were probably characterized by a lively and regular ſucceſſion of objects, and by an accurate diſplay of intelligible particulars. They muſt have excited reſpect, as differing widely from the wild, and indeterminate fancies: the vague, and incoherent images that conſtitute ordinary dreams.

In viſions, which the Jews conſidered as a mode of inſtruction ſuperior to dreams [P], the Prophet was convinced of his ſubjection to a divine power, by the miraculous ſuſpenſion of his common faculties; for though on theſe occaſions the inſpired perſon was awake, his ſenſes were entranced [Q], and inſenſible to all external objects; or ſo far enraptured, as to be alive only to impreſſions from extatic repreſentations [R]. He was likewiſe often certified, as in dreams, by diſtinct admonitions of ſome particulars readily aſcertained, and enabled to foreſee ſome circumſtances which immediately came to paſs.

In all the caſes here deſcribed, the Prophets could not, without doubting the cleareſt and moſt palpable evidence, diſtruſt the truth of the revelations which they received; and with reſpect to us, we have ample reaſon from a collective conſideration of their writings, to be convinced that their inſpiration was accompanied with ſufficient characters to diſtinguiſh it from the dreams of enthuſiaſm, or the viſions of

[P] Maim. More Nevoch, Par. II. cap. xlv. and Bayley's Eſſay on Inſpiration.

[Q] Numb. xxiv. 16.

[R] Iſaiah vi. 1. Ezek. xl. 2. Dan. viii. 17, 18. x. 8. Acts x. 11.

fancy [s]. The accompliſhment of their predictions, and the purity of their doctrines, are indeed irrefragable proofs of their divine appointment to propheſy, and to inſtruct mankind.

Upon all occaſions on which the Prophets are related to have been favoured with an intimation of the divine will, we find that they betrayed no ſymptoms of a credulous or heated imagination. Cautious and deliberate in their examination of miraculous revelations, they appear to have heſitated at firſt as doubtful of their reality; and often required a ſign, or ſome additional evidence, to ratify the commiſſion which they received, and to authoriſe their reliance on the divine ſupport in its execution. This calm and rational temper, which rendered the Prophets diſtruſtful of their own ſenſes if ſingly addreſſed, and ſolicitous to ſcrutinize the reality of every appearance, however miraculous in its circumſtances, demonſtrates clearly that they were not the dupes of their own fancy; and that they expected no reverence for their commiſſion, unleſs characterized with the ſanctions and authority of divine appointment; and very ſtriking marks of this diſpoſition were diſplayed by the Prophets, as may be inſtanced in the caſe of Moſes [t], in that of Samuel [u], and in that of Jonah [x].

[s] Biſhop Hurd's fourth Introd. Sermon on Prophec. Smith's Diſcourſe. Jer. xxiii. 28.

[t] Exod. iii. and iv.

[u] 1 Sam. iii.

[x] Jonah i.

Under

UNDER the immediate influence of the impreſſions which the Prophets received from theſe communications, they appear to have executed their commiſſion by uttering their inſtructions with a divine enthuſiaſm. Enraptured by the effects of that inſpiration which had enlightened their minds, and urged by the efficacy of a controlling power [Y], they delivered their predictions in an animated and impreſſive manner, and often with ſome bodily actions and geſtures [Z]. Theſe naturally accompanied an earneſt delivery of important convictions, and as reſtricted in conſiſtency with the dignity and venerable deportment of the Prophets, they were very different from thoſe frenzied and extravagant geſticulations by which impoſtors have ſought to recommend and enforce their fantaſtic rhapſodies [A].

THE word prophecy is often uſed in ſcripture to ſignify the ſinging of praiſes to God; in hymns doubtleſs of inſpired excellence, and occaſionally animated with predictions of futurity [B]. The ſpirit of prophecy, in this ſenſe of the word, appears ſometimes by God's permiſſion, to have communi-

[Y] Iſa. xxi. 3. Jerem. xx. 9. Dan. x. 8. Amos iii. 8.

[Z] Numb. xxiv. 4, 16. Ezek. iii. 14. Habakkuk iii. 16. R. Albo, Lib. III. c. x. Smith's Diſc.

[A] Chryſoſt. Homil. xxix. in 1 Cor. Hieron. Præf. in Nahum, and Proleg. in Habac. Lucan, Lib. V. Schol. in Plutum. Ariſtoph. Æneid, Lib. VI. Plato in Timæum. Jamb. de Myſt. ſect. 3. c. ix. Epiphan. adv. Hær. L. II. f. 1. c. 3. p. 404.

[B] Hammond on Luke i. 67. Numb. xi. 25. The Chaldee Paraphraſt tranſlates נביאים, "praiſing God." 1 Chron. xxv. 1.

cated itſelf to thoſe who heard others propheſy, the divine afflatus being conveyed by a kind of ſympathy, and harmonious affection [C]. The Prophets who were educated in thoſe ſchools of which the inſtitution is attributed to Samuel [D], were principally employed in this ſpiritual ſervice; and thus by being exerciſed in habits of piety, and duly attuned and ſanctified for the reception of the divine ſpirit, they ſeem to have been often favoured and enlightened by its ſuggeſtions. The more remarkable prophecies, however, which referred to diſtant periods, which received their accompliſhment in after ages, and ſtill continue to excite our admiration, were delivered by perſons, often indeed ſelected from theſe ſchools, but evidently endued with a larger portion of the ſpirit, and more eminently diſtinguiſhed by the marks of divine favour.

Such were the principal, if not the only modes by which God vouchſafed to reveal himſelf to the prophets; always, we have ſeen, in a manner conſiſtent with the greatneſs of his attributes, and with the dignity of the prophetic character; and all thoſe communications which in ſcripture are ſaid to have been derived from God without any particular deſcription [E] of the manner in which they were conveyed,

[C] 1 Sam. x. 5—10. xix. 20—24. Smith's Diſc. on Prophecy. And Lowth's Prælect. Poet. 18. p. 225.

[D] Preface to Second Book of Samuel.

[E] As when we are told, "thus ſaith the Lord;" or, "the word of the Lord came;" which is ſometimes applied to perſons

veyed, muſt be underſtood to have been received by one of thoſe channels which have been here pointed out.

THE Prophets, as might be expected from the diſtinguiſhed marks of divine approbation which they received, ſeem to have been ſingularly qualified for the ſacred miniſtry. It is not meant to include in this conſideration thoſe perſons of condemned or ambiguous character, who are repreſented in ſcripture as compelled occaſionally to give utterance to the ſuggeſtions of the ſacred ſpirit; but confining ourſelves to a contemplation of thoſe who are declared to have been the appointed ſervants of God, and whoſe inſpired writings ſtill continue to inſtruct mankind, it may be affirmed, that in the long and illuſtrious ſucceſſion from Moſes to Malachi, not one appears who was not entitled to conſiderable reverence by the diſplay of great and extraordinary virtues[F]. Employed in the exalted office of teaching

ſons not endued with the prophetic character. Theſe expreſſions import only, that the inſtruction was conveyed by the means then appointed, whether by angel, urim, prophet, or dream. Vid. Gen. xxii. 1. with Calmet. Joſhua i. 1. 1 Kings iii. 11. Jer. i. 2—4. Hoſea i. 1, &c. Maimon. More Nevoch, Par. II. c. xli.

[F] 2 Pet. i. 21. The Hebrew doctors collect this general rule from a conſideration of the characters of the Prophets, that the ſpirit of prophecy never reſted upon any but a holy and wiſe man; one whoſe paſſions were allayed. Vid. R. Albo Maam. iii. c. 36. Porta Moſis in Pocock's works. Abarb. Præf. in xii. Prophet. Maimon. More Nevoch, Par. II. c. xxxvi.

ing and reforming mankind, they appear to have been animated with a becoming and correſpondent zeal. No unworthy paſſions, nor diſingenuous motives, were permitted to interfere with their great deſigns. Not indeed, that they were always directed by the guidance of the ſpirit to undeviating propriety of life, ſince it is manifeſt that they ſometimes acted as unaſſiſted men ſubject to error; but notwithſtanding thoſe failings which their own ingenuous confeſſions have unveiled, it appears, that in general their paſſions were controlled in ſubjection to thoſe perfect laws which they taught, and that the ſtrength of their convictions rendered them inſenſible to ſecular attractions. When not immediately employed in the diſcharge of their ſacred office, they lived ſequeſtered from the world in religious communities [G]; or wandered "in deſerts, in mountains, and in caves of the earth;" diſtinguiſhed by their apparel, and by the general ſimplicity of their ſtile of life [H]. They were the eſtabliſhed oracles of their country, and conſulted upon all occaſions when it was neceſſary to collect the divine will on any civil or religious queſtion; and we hear of no ſchiſms or diviſions while they flouriſhed. They even con-

c. xxxvi. Vid. alſo, Origen. cont. Celſ. Lib. VII. p. 336. edit. Cantab. Gem. Peſac. c. vi. The rule however is not univerſally true. Vid. Numb. xxiv.

[G] There were ſchools of the Prophets at Jeruſalem, Bethel, Jericho, Ramah, and Gilgal. Vid. 2 Kings xxii. 14. 2 Kings ii. 5. 1 Sam. xix. 20. 2 Kings iv. 38.

[H] 2 Kings i. 8. iv. 10, 38. vi. 1. Iſa. xx. 2. Matt. iii. 4. Heb. xi. 38. Rev. xi. 3.

deſcended

deſcended to inform the people of common concerns in trivial caſes, in order to preclude them from all pretence or excuſe for reſorting to idolatrous practices, and heathen divinations; and they were always furniſhed with ſome preſcribed mode of conſulting God, or obtained revelations by prayer [I]; for we are not to ſuppoſe that they were invariably empowered to propheſy by any permanent or perpetual inſpiration [K]. Theſe illuſtrious perſonages were likewiſe as well the types, as the harbingers of that greater Prophet whom they foretold; and in the general outline of their character, as well as in particular events of their lives, they prefigured to the Jews the future teacher of mankind. Like him, alſo, they laboured by every exertion, to inſtruct and reclaim; reproving and threatening the ſinful, however exalted in rank, or encircled by power, with ſuch fearleſs confidence and ſincerity, as often excited reſpect. The moſt intemperate princes were ſometimes compelled unwillingly to hear and to obey their directions [L], though often ſo incenſed by their rebuke, as to reſent it by the ſevereſt perſecutions. Then it was that the Prophets evinced the integrity of their characters, by zealouſly encountering oppreſſion, hatred, and death, in the cauſe of religion. Then it was

[I] Jerem. xxxiii. 3.

[K] Maimon. More Nevoch, Pars II. cap. xxxvi. & xlv. Moſes, and as ſome ſay, David, were ſuppoſed to be exceptions to this remark, and to have been perpetually inſpired.

[L] 1 Kings xii. 21—24. xiii. 2—6. xx. 42, 43. xxi. 27. 2 Chron. xxviii. 9—14.

that

that they firmly ſupported " trial of cruel mockings and ſcourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and impriſonment. They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, were tempted, were ſlain with the ſword: they wandered about, deſtitute, afflicted, tormented [M];" evil intreated for thoſe virtues of which the memorial ſhould flouriſh to poſterity, and martyred for righteouſneſs, which when ever reſentment ſhould ſubſide, it would be deemed honourable to reverence [N].

THE manner in which the Prophets publiſhed their predictions, was either by uttering them aloud in ſome public place, or by affixing them on the gates of the temple [O], where they might be generally ſeen and read. Upon ſome important occaſions, when it was neceſſary to rouſe the fears of a diſobedient people, and to recal them to repentance, the Prophets, as objects of univerſal attention, appear to have walked about publicly in ſackcloth, and with every external mark of humiliation and ſorrow. They then adopted extraordinary modes of expreſſing their convictions of impending wrath, and endeavoured to awaken the apprehenſions of their country, by the moſt ſtriking illuſtration of threatened puniſhment. Thus Jeremiah made bonds and yokes, and put them upon his neck [P], ſtrongly to intimate

[M] Heb. xi. 36, & ſeq. James v. 10.

[N] Matt. xxiii. 27—29.

[O] Jer. vii. 2. iii. 10. Howel, Lib. VI. p. 167.

[P] Jerem. xxvii. It is clear from the account in the next chapter, that Jeremiah put the yoke on his own neck. Vid. chap.

intimate the ſubjection that God would bring on the nations whom Nebuchadnezzer ſhould ſubdue. Iſaiah likewiſe walked naked, that is, without the rough garment of the Prophet [Q], and barefoot [R], as a ſign of the diſtreſs that awaited the Egyptians. So Jeremiah broke the potter's veſſel [S]; and Ezekiel publickly removed his houſehold goods [T] from the city; more forcibly to repreſent by theſe actions ſome correſpondent calamities ready to fall on nations obnoxious to God's wrath; this mode of

chap. xxxviii. 10. So alſo, 1 Kings xxii. 11. Acts xxi. 11. But, as to ſend bonds and yokes may imply only figuratively, to predict captivity, it is not neceſſary to ſuppoſe that Jeremiah literally ſent yokes and bonds to all the kings enumerated in the account, but only that he foretold their fate; perhaps illuſtrating his prophecy by ſome ſignificant tokens. Vid. Mede's Com. on Apocal. Part I. p. 470. Waterland's Tracts on Jerem. xxvii. 23.

[Q] Iſa. xx. Harmer's Obſervat. vol. iv. p. 402. John xxi. 7. Origen cont. Celſ. Lib. VII. p. 336.

[R] It is ſaid in the text, three years, which means at intervals during that time. Some think that we ſhould underſtand three days; a year being ſometimes placed in prophetic language for a day. Others maintain, that the Hebrew text, agreeably to the Maſoretic punctuation, applies the three years, not to Iſaiah's walking, but to the calamity thereby foreſhewn, and the Seventy, St. Jerom, and our old Engliſh verſions, adopt this conſtruction. Others, laſtly, conſider the account as the narrative of a tranſaction in viſion, or as a parable related by Iſaiah.

[S] Jerem. xix.

[T] Ezek. xii. 7. compared with 2 Kings xxv. 4, 5. where the accompliſhment of this typical prophecy is related. Vid. alſo, Ezek. xxxvii. 16—20.

expreſſing

expreſſing important circumſtances by action, being cuſtomary and familiar among all Eaſtern nations.

THE conduct of the Prophets upon theſe occaſions muſt be conſidered with reflection on the importance of their miniſtry; and with great allowance for difference of manners in their time; and then will this mode of propheſying by actions, appear to have been not only very ſtriking and impreſſive, but ſtrictly agreeable to the deſign and decorum of the prophetic character. It has, however, been ſtrenuouſly maintained, that many actions attributed to the Prophets, and even ſome of thoſe which have been here repreſented as real, were not actually performed; and that many of theſe accounts ſhould be conſidered as parables related by the Prophets; or as deſcriptive of tranſactions in viſion, intended ſtrongly to impreſs the imagination of the Prophets, and to inform them ſymbolically of thoſe things in which they were to inſtruct the people [u]. So very poſitive have been the ſentiments on both ſides, of thoſe who have ſupported theſe oppoſite opinions, that it would be preſumptuous to decide on the ſubject. The Prophets themſelves ſometimes inform us only of certain commands which they received, without ex-

[u] Where it is ſaid, that "the hand of the Lord was upon the Prophet," or "the word of the Lord came unto him," it is generally thought, that a viſion is deſcribed; and where the inſtruction of the Prophet only was deſigned, the tranſaction was probably confined to the ſcene of the Prophet's imagination. Vid. Gen. xv. 4, 5. Jerem. i. 11, 13. xviii. 1—4. xxiv. 1—4. Ezek. iii. 22—27. viii. xxxvii.

plaining

plaining whether they underſtood them as figurative inſtructions to be deſcribed to the people, or whether they literally obeyed them. This appears in the account given by Ezekiel, in which he informs us, that he was directed to make a mimic portraiture of a ſiege, and to continue a great length of time lying on his ſide; as alſo in that, in which he declares himſelf to have been commanded to ſhave and to conſume his hair [x]. The nature of theſe injunctions ſeems to import only ſome figurative inſtructions given, and obeyed in viſion [y]. At other times the Prophets deſcribe not merely the precept, but the tranſaction, with particulars ſo minutely and circumſtantially detailed, that we might be led to admit a poſitive hiſtorical ſenſe, did not the difficulties

[x] Ezekiel iv. and v.

[y] It is not poſitively aſſerted, that theſe injunctions were not literally executed, but that, probably, they never were, ſince Ezekiel does not profeſs actually to have performed them; and the nature of the thing ſeems to prove, that they were acted only in the imagination of the Prophet. But if the hiſtorical ſenſe be received, it certainly may be vindicated from all objections. Ezekiel might have been miraculouſly enabled to bear the fatigue of lying ſo long on his ſide; and the objection of Maimonides to the reality of the ſecond tranſaction is frivolous, for though it was unlawful for the prieſt to ſhave (Vid. Levit. xxv. 5. Ezek. xliv. 20.) the Law might certainly be diſpenſed with, by God's command; and, as uncuſtomary, it muſt have been more remarkable as a ſign. The portraiture of the ſiege, as repreſented by the Prophet, whether it were real or viſionary, was deſcriptive of the circumſtances that occurred at the taking of Jeruſalem. Compare Ezek. 1—3. with Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. c. xi.

and

and inadequate advantage of an actual performance tend to demonſtrate that the ſcene muſt have been fictitious. Thus, however circumſtantial be the relation of Jeremiah, relative to his concealment of the girdle, it is difficult to conceive that God ſhould command the Prophet to take two ſuch long journies [z] merely for the purpoſe of this typical illuſtration [A]. Nor was it poſſible, without miracles multiplied for a purpoſe which might as well have been effected by a prophetic viſion, that Jeremiah ſhould make the various nations which he enumerates, drink of the cup of fury, which he profeſſed to have received at God's hand [B]. Theſe tranſactions, if performed in viſion, might be deſcribed by the Prophets as ſigns and intimations to thoſe whom they addreſſed. The

[z] Jerem. xiii. "Abſit," ſays Maimonides, in a ſpirit of haſty and indignant piety, "ut Deus Prophetas ſuos ſtultis vel Ebriis ſimiles reddat." But this judicious writer appears to judge too precipitately, and contrary to the opinion of his countrymen, where he determines, that, whenever theſe actions are repreſented by way of parable, or ſimilitude, they muſt be underſtood as viſionary tranſactions. Vid. More Nevoch, Par. II. c. xlvi. Hieron. Procem. in Oſee. Stillingfleet's Letter to a Deiſt, p. 131.

[A] From Jeruſalem to the Euphrates, was about 200 leagues. Bochart conceives, that as the initial letter of names and places is often dropped, the Hebrew word phrath, may ſtand for Ephrath, or Ephratah, which was Bethlehem, about ſix miles from Jeruſalem. Vid Bochart. Oper. Poſt. p. 956.

[B] Jerem. xxv. 15—29. This might be a direction to the Prophet, inſtructing him figuratively to predict God's anger, and the Prophet may be ſuppoſed to have obeyed it in a figurative ſenſe.

people

people would not indeed be ſo ſtrongly affected thereby, as if they had really witneſſed the performance of theſe actions; and it muſt be added, that where the circumſtances do not abſolutely authorize us to ſuppoſe that the Prophet ſpeaks of tranſactions in viſion, and where the action might reaſonably and advantageouſly to the Prophet's deſigns be literally performed, it is more conſiſtent with the rules that ſhould be obſerved in the interpretation of ſcripture, to admit a literal and poſitive conſtruction [c].

It is now neceſſary to conſider more immediately the writings of the Prophets. It is probable from the variety of ſtile obſervable in theſe, that the Holy Spirit ſuggeſted in general, only the matter, and not the words, to the Prophets [d]; and this idea is confirmed, when we reflect that our Saviour and his apoſtles cited in general more according to the ſenſe, than to the letter of ſcripture [e], and commonly from the Septuagint verſion, at leaſt, when it did not differ from the Hebrew original. Moſes is by ſome ſuppoſed to have been an exception in this particular, and to have received the very words and phraſes in which the communications that he ob-

[c] Witſius Miſcel. vol. i. p. 94. Carpzov. Introd. Par. III. p. 50. Pocock on Hoſea, ch. i. 2. Smith's Diſc. on Prophecy, ch. vi. Jenkins's Reaſonab. vol. ii. p. 50. Lakemacher Obſerv. Philol. vol. ii. p. 70. Waterland's Tracts. Warburt. Div. Legat. Lib. IV. ſect. 4.

[d] Maimon. More Nevoch. Par. II. cap. xxix. Origen. Epiſt. ad African.

[e] Abarbinel in Jer. xlix.

tained are deſcribed [F]. But this remark muſt at leaſt be confined to the decalogue, of which the laws were graven on the tablets by God himſelf; and even in the recapitulation of theſe in Moab, Moſes varies a little in the expreſſions, to intimate, probably, that the ſenſe, and not the letter, is the important object of attention. Upon all occaſions, however, when the Prophets were addreſſed by an audible voice, doubtleſs they recollected by divine aſſiſtance every word and expreſſion in which the revealed inſtructions were conveyed. Where they collected their information from the repreſentation of hieroglyphical circumſtances in dreams and viſions, they were probably left to expreſs in their own language the things which they had beheld. And hence is the ſtile of every Prophet more or leſs conſpicuous, according to the nature and clearneſs of the revelation imparted to him [G], and likewiſe characterized with peculiar diſcriminations reſulting from education, and particular intercourſe and habits of life. It cannot however be denied, that ſometimes the Prophets were inſtructed in the very expreſſions which they ſhould uſe [H]; and when writing under the influence of that inſpiration which dictated what-

[F] Biſhop Hurd on Prophecy. Holden's Paraphraſe on Iſaiah. Lowth on Iſaiah. Whitby's Preface to Com. Gem. Sanhed.

[G] Zachary's, Ezekiel's, and Daniel's Prophecies, are ſometimes obſcure from the multitude of images repreſented to their imaginations in viſion. Vid. R. Albo, cap. x.

[H] 1 Cor. ii. 13.

ever

ever was conducive to the promotion of God's deſigns, they delivered both ſentiments and expreſſions, of which they themſelves underſtood not always the full importance and extent [I]. Senſible of the predominating power [K], they communicated their divine intelligence as the ſpirit gave utterance; conveying prophecies of which neither they, nor their hearers, probably, perceived the full ſcope, nor foreſaw diſtinctly the ſpiritual accompliſhment; writing for the advantage of thoſe that were to come after, and to furniſh evidence in ſupport of a future diſpenſation.

THE great object of prophecy was, as has been before obſerved, a deſcription of the Meſſiah, and of his kingdom [L]. Theſe were gradually unfolded by ſucceſſive Prophets, in predictions more and more diſtinct. They were at firſt held forth in general promiſes; they were afterwards deſcribed by figures, and ſhadowed out under types and alluſive inſtitutions; as well as clearly foretold in the full luſtre of deſcriptive prophecy. A complete explication of the ſcripture types would require more compaſs than can be here allowed. It may, however, be obſerved by way of general illuſtration, that the remarkable perſonages under the old diſpenſation were ſometimes in

[I] Dan. viii. 13, 14, 26, 27. xii. 8. 1 Cor. xiii. 9—12. 1 Pet. i. 10, 11, 12.

[K] Jerem. xx. 9. Ezek. iii. 14.

[L] Matt. xxvi. 56. Luke i. 70. xviii. 31. xxiv. 44. John i. 45. Acts iii. 18, 24. x. 43. xiii. 27. xv. 15. xxviii. 23. 1 Pet. i. 10—12. Maimon. in Sanh. R. Solomon Jarchi, in Zechar. ix. Lowman on Prophecy.

the deſcription of their characters, and in the events of their lives [M], the repreſentatives of the future diſpenſers of evangelical bleſſings, as Moſes and David were unqueſtionably types of Chriſt [N]. Perſons likewiſe were ſometimes deſcriptive of things, as Sarah and Hagar were allegorical figures of the two covenants [O]. And on the other hand, things were uſed to ſymbolize perſons, as the brazen ſerpent, and the Paſchal Lamb [P], were ſigns of our healing and ſpotleſs Redeemer. And ſo, laſtly, ceremonial appointments, and legal circumſtances, were pre-ordained as ſignificant of Goſpel inſtitutions [Q].

HENCE it was that many of the deſcriptions of the Prophets had a twofold character: bearing often an immediate reference to preſent circumſtances, and yet being in their nature predictive of future occurrences. What they reported of the type was often in a more ſignal manner applicable to the thing typified [R]; what they ſpoke literally of preſent, was

[M] Matt. xii. 40.

[N] Ezek. xxxiv. 23. Vid. alſo, Matt. xi. 14: Heb. vi. 20. vii. 1—3.

[O] Gal. iv. 22—31. and Rom. ix. 8—13.

[P] John iii. 14. Comp. alſo, Exod. xii. 46. with John xix. 36.

[Q] 1 Cor. x. 1—11. Heb. viii. 5. ix. x. 1 Pet. iii. 20, 22. Euſeb. Præp. Evang. Lib. VIII. c. x. Lowth's Preface to Comm. on Prophets. Lowth's Preface to Iſaiah. Vid. alſo, The Accounts of Exodus and Leviticus.

[R] Pſalm xxi. 4, 5, 6. xl. 1, 7—10. Canticles. Lament. iii. 1—30. Pſa. xli. 9. comp. with John xiii. 18. Dan. xi. 36, 37.

figuratively

figuratively deſcriptive of future particulars [s]; and what was applied in a figurative ſenſe to exiſting perſons, was often actually characteriſtic of their diſtant archetypes [t]. Many paſſages, then, in the Old Teſtament, which in their firſt aſpect appear to be hiſtorical, are in fact prophetic, and they are ſo cited in the New Teſtament, not by way of ordinary accommodation, or caſual coincidence, but as intentionally predictive, as having a double ſenſe, a literal, and myſtical interpretation [u].

This mode of wrapping up religious truths in allegory, was practiſed by all nations [x]. It was familiar to the Jews, and agreeable to their ideas of the nature of the ſcriptures [y]. It gives, likewiſe, great intereſt and importance to the ſacred book; in the peruſal of which the diligent are daily recompenſed by the diſcovery of more admirable contrivance, and unexpected beauties; the intimate analogy which was concerted between the Jewiſh and the Chriſtian church, rendering this figurative diſplay ſtrikingly proper and curious.

[s] Pſalms and Prophets, paſſim.

[t] Pſalm xxii. 16—18. &c.

[u] Comp. Hoſea xi. 1. with Matt. ii. 15.

[x] Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. V.

[y] Pſalm cxix. 18. Ecclus. xlviii. 10. and Mede's Diſc. c. xxv. Acts viii. 34. Maimon. More Nevoch, Part II. c. xliii. R. David Kimchi on Hoſea i. 4. in Bemidbar Rab. in Voiſin on Pug. f. p. 154. M. B. Iſrael ſpes Iſraelis, ſect. 25. Philo de Vit. Contem. p. 893. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. III. cap. ix. Origen. c. Celſ. Lib. II. p. 59. Chandler's Def. ſect. 5. ch. iii.

BESIDES thoſe hiſtorical paſſages of which the covert alluſions were explained by the interpretation of the Goſpel writers, who were enlightened by the ſpirit to unfold the myſteries of ſcripture, the Prophets often uttered poſitive predictions, which in conſequence of the correſpondence eſtabliſhed between the two diſpenſations were deſcriptive of a double event; however they might be themſelves ignorant of the full extent of thoſe prophecies which they delivered. For inſtance, their promiſes of preſent ſucceſs and deliverances, were often ſignificant of diſtant benefits, and ſecular conſolations conveyed aſſurances of evangelical bleſſings [z]. Thus their prophecies received completion in a firſt and ſecondary view. As being, in part, ſigns to excite confidence, they had an immediate accompliſhment, but were afterwards fulfilled in a more illuſtrious ſenſe [A]; the Prophets being inſpired by the ſuggeſtions of the ſpirit, to uſe expreſſions magnificent enough to include the ſubſtance in the deſcription of the figure. That many of the prophecies in the Old Teſtament were direct, and ſingly and excluſively

[z] 2 Sam. vii. 13, 14. comp. with Heb. i. 5. Penſees de Paſcal, ſect. 10, 14.

[A] 1 Kings xiii. 2, 3. Iſaiah vii. 14. and Matt. i. 22. Comp. Dan. ix. 27. and xii. 7. with 1 Macc. i. 54. and Matt. xxiv. 15. Vitringa Obſer. Sac. Lib. VI. cap. xx. &c. Glaſſii Philo. Sac. Lib. II. Witſii Miſcel. Sac. tom. i. Lib. III. cap. iii. and Lib. II. Diſſ. 1, 2. Æcon. Fœd. Lib. IV. c. vi—x. Sixt. Senen. in Bib. Sanct. Cunæus Rep. Heb. Jenkins's Reaſon. Penſees de Paſcal, ch. xv. n. 13. Jackſon's Works, vol. ii. B. vii. ſect. 2.

applicable

applicable to, and accompliſhed in our Saviour, is certain [B]; and that ſome paſſages from the Old Teſtament are cited only by way of accommodation to circumſtances deſcribed in the New, is, perhaps, equally true [C]. But that this typical kind of prophecy was likewiſe employed is evident, as well from the interpretation of the paſſages above referred to, as from the application of many other parts of ſcripture by the ſacred writers, and, indeed, from their expreſs declarations [D].

It requires much attention to comprehend the full import and extent of this typical diſpenſation, and the chief obſcurities which prevail in the ſacred writings are to be attributed to the double character of prophecy [E]. To unravel this, is, however, an intereſting and inſtructive ſtudy; though an admiration of the ſpiritual meaning ſhould never lead us to diſregard or undervalue the firſt and evident ſignification; for many great men have been ſo dazzled by

[B] Gen. xlix. 10. Pſal. xlii. xlv. Iſaiah lii. liii. Dan. vii. 13, 14. Micah v. 2. Zechar. ix. 9. Mal. iii. 1. Origen. cont. Celſ. Lib. I. p. 39.

[C] Comp. Exod. xvi. 18. with 2 Cor. viii. 15. Many paſſages, however, ſuppoſed accidentally to correſpond, ſeem to have been deſignedly prophetic. Comp. Iſaiah xxix. 13. with Matt. xv. 7, 8. Iſaiah vi. 9. with Matt. xiii. 14. Pſal. lxxii. 2. with Matt. xiii. 35. Jerem. xxxi. 15. with Matt. ii. 17.

[D] Hoſ. xii. 10. 1 Cor. x. 11. Heb. ix. x. Gal. iii. 24. Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. V. p. 140. Hilar. in Pſa. lxiii. n. 2, 3. Auguſt. de Doct. Chriſt. Lib. III. c. ix. Waterland's Preface to Scrip. Vindic. and Lancaſter's Abridg. of Daubuz.

[E] Pfeiffer Hermeneut. Sac. p. 633. Chand. Def. ſect. 1. Lowth's Vindic. of Old and New Teſt.

their diſcoveries in this mode of explication, as to be hurried into wild and extravagant exceſs; as is evident from the writings of Origen [F], and St. Jerom [G]; as alſo from the commentaries of St. Auſtin, who acknowledges [H] that he had too far indulged in the fancies of an exuberant imagination, declaring that the other parts of ſcripture are the beſt commentaries. The apoſtles and the evangeliſts are, indeed, the beſt expoſitors; but where theſe infallible guides have led the way, we need not heſitate to follow their ſteps by the light of clear reaſon, and juſt analogy.

It is this double character of prophecy which occaſions thoſe unexpected tranſitions and ſudden interchange of circumſtance ſo obſervable in the prophetic books. Hence different predictions are ſometimes blended and mixed together [I]; temporal and ſpiritual

[F] Origen was a ſcholar of Clemens Alexandrinus, who derived his taſte for allegory from the works of Philo the Jew. Vid. Phot. Cod. 105. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. IV. cap. xix. Hieron. Epiſt. ad Mag. Smallbrooke's Anſwer to Woolſton, vol. i. p. 93.

[G] He profeſſes, in the fervor of youthful fancy, to have ſpiritualized Obadiah, before he underſtood it, and prefers his hiſtorical explications as a work *Maturæ Senectutis*. Vid. Procem. in Abdiam.

[H] Auguſt. Retract. vol. i. cap. xviii. He contended for a fourfold ſenſe of ſcripture. Vid. Glaſſii Philol. II. p. 255. et ſeq. Vitringa Obſerv. Sac. Bib. VI. c. xx.

[I] As thoſe which refer to the firſt and ſecond reſtoration of the Jews, and to the firſt and ſecond coming of Chriſt; the Prophets taking occaſion from the deſcription of near, to launch

ſpiritual deliverances are foretold in one prophecy; and great and ſmaller events are combined in one point of view. Hence likewiſe one chain of connected deſign runs through the whole ſcheme of prophecy; and a continuation of events ſucceſſively fulfilling, and ſucceſſively branching out into new predictions, continued to confirm the faith, and to keep alive the expectations of the Jews. Hence was it the character of the prophetic ſpirit to be rapid in its deſcriptions, and regardleſs of the order of hiſtory; to paſs with quick and unexpected celerity from ſubject to ſubject, and from period to period. "And we muſt allow," ſays Lord Bacon [K], "for that latitude that is agreeable and familiar to prophecy, which is of the nature of its author, with whom a thouſand years are but as one day." The whole of the great ſcheme muſt have been at once preſent to the divine mind, but God deſcribed its parts in detail to mankind; in ſuch meaſures, and in ſuch proportions, that the connection of every link was obvious, and its relations apparent in every point of view, till the harmony and entire conſiſtency of the plan were diſplayed to thoſe who witneſſed its perfection in the advent of Chriſt.

It may be farther obſerved of prophecy as it appears in the ſacred writings, that it was "a light ſhining in a dark place [L];" that it was not gene-

launch out into that of diſtant circumſtances, as did our Saviour in his famous Prophecy. Vid. Matt. xxiv. Vid. Preface to Iſaiah.

[K] Bacon de Augm. Scient. Lib. II.

[L] 2 Peter i. 19.

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rally designed to be so clear as to excite an expectation of particular events, or a desire of counteracting foreseen calamities [M]; but that it was intended in the accomplishment of its predictions to demonstrate the wisdom and power of God [N]. It was sufficiently exact in its descriptions to authenticate its pretensions to a divine authority, and to produce, when it came to pass, an acknowledgment of its unerring certainty. Had it been more clear, it must have controlled the freedom of human actions; or have appeared to have produced its own accomplishment, furnishing sinners with a plea of necessity [O]. Had the period likewise of the Messiah's advent been at first distinctly and precisely revealed, the Jews would have disregarded so distant an hope. Sometimes, however, when occasion required, the predictions of the Prophets were positive, and exactly descriptive [P], and occasionally delivered with an accurate and definite

[M] Had the Jews certainly known Christ to have been the predicted Messiah, they would not have crucified the Lord of life. Vid. Acts xiii. 27. iii. 17.

[N] Sir Isaac Newton on Dan. p. 251. Hurd on Prophecy, Serm. ii. John xiii. 19. xvi. 4. Lowth's Vindication of the Divine Authority of the Old and New Test. p. 171. The prophecies relative to the Messiah must have appeared very obscure and irreconcileable with each other before the appearance of Christ, as they referred both to his human and divine character, to his earthly sufferings and future exaltation.

[O] Lowth's Vindicat. p. 77.

[P] Numb. xxiv. 17. Isa. ix. 6. Zechar. ix. 9. xi. 12, 13. Dan. ii. 38—45. Mal. i. 1. iii. 1.

designation of names and times [Q]. And though the character and kingdom of Chriſt were at firſt held out in general and indeterminate promiſes, yet ſo emphatic were the aſſurances as the time approached, and ſo peremptory the limitation of its period; ſo forcible and particular were the prophecies concerning the Meſſiah, when collected and concentered into one point of view; that about the æra of our Saviour's birth, a very general perſuaſion of the inſtant appearance of ſome great and extraordinary perſonage prevailed, not only in Judæa, but alſo in other countries; as is evident from the accounts of various writers [R], ſacred and prophane [S].

It has been very erroneouſly imagined, that the Prophets and inſpired writers of the Old Teſtament took but little pains to inſtruct the Iſraelites in the doctrine of a future ſtate; and that in their exhortations and threats, they confined themſelves entirely to motives of temporal reward and puniſhment. And

[Q] Gen. xv. 13. Numb. xiv. 33. Jerem. xxv. 11, 12. Dan. ix. 24, 25. Micah v. 2.

[R] New Teſt. paſſim. Vid. alſo, 1 Macc. iv. 46. xiv. 41. and Preface to the Hiſtorical Books, p. 133, note o.

[S] Cicero de Divin. Lib. II. Tacit. Hiſtor. Lib. V. Sueton. Veſpaſ. c. iv. Virgil's Eclog. iv. Æneid VI. l. 791. et ſeq. Juſtin. in Octav. c. xciv. Voſſius de Sibyl. Orac. c. iv. Cudworth's Intell. Syſt. B. I. c. iv. Boyle's Lect. vol. ii. c. 516. Nechuminas, a Jewiſh Rabbi, is ſaid to have affirmed, about 50 years before the birth of Chriſt, that the appearance of the Meſſiah could not be delayed above 50 years; collecting his opinion, probably, from the prophecies of Daniel.

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it has been as ſtrangely aſſerted, that though the Jews thought with the reſt of mankind, that the ſoul ſurvived the body, yet that they ſimply concluded that it returned to him who gave it, without any intereſting ſpeculations concerning its ſtate of ſurvivorſhip [T]. But though, as it has been before obſerved [U], Moſes annexed only temporal ſanctions to his laws, (which by no means excluded, but were indeed underſtood to be figurative of greater promiſes [X],) yet the Prophets in their addreſſes to the hopes and fears of their countrymen, unqueſtionably held out the encouragement of eternal happineſs, and the terrors of eternal miſery. It is certain alſo, that the Jews looked anxiouſly forward to that ſtate of immortality which they expected to inherit, not merely from the general conviction of a future ſtate of exiſtence, which as an obvious truth they in common with all other nations entertained; but from the more poſitive and particular information that they obtained from revealed accounts; for not to mention that the general denunciations of God's wrath muſt have been underſtood to involve declara-

[T] Le Clerc, Warburton, &c. Vid. Div. Legat. Book V. ſect. 6. p. 476.

[U] Preface to Pentateuch, p. 61.

[X] Heb. xi. 8—16, 25, 26. Hence it is, that Maimonides obſerves, "Quod ad reſurrectionem autem mortuorum, eſt ea fundamentum e fundamentis, legis Moſis, quam ſi quis non credat, non eſt ipſi in Judæorum Religione ſors aut locus." Vid. Pocock's Porta Moſis, p. 60, and yet his countrymen conſidered his teſtimony as not ſufficiently ſtrong, as Maimonides confeſſes. Vid. alſo Levit. xviii. 5.

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tions of permanent retribution, it is manifeſt from numberleſs paſſages of ſcripture, that the Prophets directly appealed to thoſe convictions which the people cheriſhed as to a future ſtate; and that they reſted on motives of future conſideration, as on the ſtrongeſt arguments to excite obedience [y]. The Prophets did not, it is true, ſo fully inſiſt upon theſe motives, nor ſo perfectly reveal the aſſurance and character of a future judgment, as did our Saviour, who brought life and immortality diſtinctly to view [z], and whoſe Goſpel was entirely grounded on thoſe

[y] Job xiii. 15. xix. 25—29. and Preface to Job. Pſa. i. 5. xvi. 11. xxx. 19, 20. l. lviii. 11. lxxiii. 3—28. lxxxvii. 6. xcvi. 13. cxvi. 15. cxxxiii. 3. Prov. x. 2, 28. xi. 7, 8. xiv. 32. xv. 24. xxi. 16. xxiii. 18. xxiv. 12. comp. with Rom. ii. 6. and Rev. xxii. 12. Eccleſ. iii. 17, 21. xi. 9. xii. 7, 14. Iſa. ii. 17. v. 16. xxv. 8. xxvi. 9, 19. lvii. 1, 2. lviii. 8. lxiv. 4. comp. with 1 Cor. ii. 9. Jerem. xvii. 11, 13. Ezek. xviii. xxxii. 27. Dan. vii. 10, 18. xii. 2, 3, 13. Hoſea xiii. 14. Zephan. iii. 8. Zech. iii. 7. Malach. iii. 16, 18. iv. 1.

[z] Chriſt is ſaid, in our tranſlation, to have "brought life and immortality to light through the Goſpel," 2 Tim. i. 10. which by no means imports that the doctrine was before unknown, but agreeably to the ſenſe of the original, φωτισαντος ζωην, και αφθαρσιαν, that he rendered life and immortality more clear, or diffuſed light on that doctrine, as the word φωτιζειν ſignifies in John i. 9. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Epheſ. iii. 9. and elſewhere. Vid. Robertſon's Clavis Pentateuchi, Præf. p. 19. note *. Or perhaps the text means, that Chriſt having aboliſhed death, opened to us a proſpect of immortality, and unfolded the doctrine to the Gentile world, "which ſat in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death." Chriſt likewiſe brought life and immortality to light by annexing them as covenanted rewards

thoſe higher ſanctions and better promiſes [A]; but they nevertheleſs did apply to theſe cogent motives, and more forcibly ſo, as that covenant approached to which Immortality was annexed as a poſitive and declared condition [B].

THE Jews could not have believed the tranſlation of Enoch [C], and Elijah [D], the recompence of the Patriarchs [E], and of their great law-giver, who had no known ſepulchre, or the accompliſhment of the promiſes [F], to their own advantage, without a

wards to his Goſpel. Pocock conceives, that the doctrine of the reſurrection was leſs explicitly laid down in the Law than in the Goſpel, becauſe the former was delivered to the poſterity of Abraham, who entertained no doubts on the ſubject; whereas the Goſpel was communicated to nations to whom the doctrine was not previouſly revealed; whence the remark of the Athenian philoſophers concerning the preaching of St. Paul. Acts xvii. 18. Vid. Notæ Miſcel. in Porta Moſis, c. vi.

[A] Heb. viii. 6.

[B] Bull's Harmon. Apoſt. c. x. § 8.

[C] Gen. v. 24. Heb. xi. 5.

[D] 2 Kings ii. 11.

[E] The curſes denounced againſt Adam could not be removed from the Patriarchs, as was promiſed by God's covenant, unleſs by a reſtoration to the proſpect of eternal life; and the Jews muſt have known that their forefathers were dead without having received the accompliſhment of the promiſes. Vid. Heb. xi. 39, 40.

[F] The Jews muſt have perceived that temporal rewards were not allotted to individuals in proportion to their deſerts; they muſt have ſeen the righteous oppreſſed, and the wicked triumphant; and therefore in the conviction of God's truth, they muſt have looked to the completion of his promiſes and threats in a future life.

reliance

reliance on the enjoyment of ſome future ſtate in which they ſhould obtain the conſummation of their reward; and thoſe among them whoſe opinions were grounded on revelation, unqueſtionably built their faith on the expectation of a future life and judgment; as is evident from many parts of the Old Teſtament [G], as well as from expreſs declarations of the evangelical writers in the New [H]: from whatever we can collect concerning their opinions before [I] and after the publication of the Goſpel;

[G] Gen. i. 27. ii. 7. xxxvii. 35. Numb. xxiii. 10. Deut. xiv. 1, 2. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6. xxv. 29. xxviii. 8, 15. 2 Sam. xii. 23. 2 Kings xxii. 20. Pſal. xxiii. 4. The paſſages, which ſeem to favour a contrary opinion, and to import a diſtruſt in a future ſtate, are only opinions ſtated for refutation, or ſtrong repreſentations of the effects of death, as to the preſent world. They imply that by the ordinary laws of nature, or by man's proper force, the dead ſhould not be reſtored.

[H] Matt. xxii. 23, 29—32. Luke xvi. 31. xx. 37, 38. John v. 39. viii. 26. xi. 24. Acts xxiii. 8. xxiv. 14—16. Heb. xi. 10, 16, 35, 39, 40. Luke xiii. 14. and Matt. xiii. 40—43, and 51. The Sadducees were diſtinguiſhed as a ſect who denied the reſurrection. Acts xxiii. 8.

[I] Wiſd. iii. 1, 10, 18, 19. iv. 7. v. 1, 5, 15. viii. 13. Ecclus xlix. 10. 2 Macc. vii. 9, 11, 14, 23, 29, 36. xiv. 46. The Hebrew notions concerning the Sheol (the Hades of the Septuagint) which was the ſuppoſed place of departed ſouls, often mentioned in the Old Teſtament; concerning the Rephaim, (the giants, or ghoſts of dead men, ſpoken of in Job xxvi. 5. and elſewhere) and concerning "the gathering of the righteous:" the requeſt of Saul to the woman of Endor; and laſtly, the Paradiſe and the Gehenna, mentioned in the New Teſtament, all tend to prove, that the Jews, before the coming of Chriſt, believed the ſeparate exiſtence of the ſoul, and a future ſtate of reward and puniſhment.

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as well as from that firm confidence in a reſurrection and future judgment which they now derive from the promiſes of Moſes, and of the Prophets [K], and which many expect in the time of the Meſſiah [L].

The language of the Prophets is remarkable for its magnificence. Each writer is diſtinguiſhed for peculiar beauties; but their ſtile in general may be characterized as ſtrong, animated, and impreſſive. Its ornaments are derived not from accumulation of epithet, or laboured harmony, but from the real grandeur of its images, and the majeſtic force of its expreſſions. It is varied with ſtriking propriety, and enlivened with quick but eaſy tranſitions. Its ſudden burſts of eloquence, its earneſt warmth, its affecting exhortations and appeals, afford very intereſting proofs of that lively impreſſion, and of that inſpired conviction, under which the Prophets wrote; and which enabled them among a people not diſtinguiſhed for genius, to ſurpaſs in every variety of compoſition, the moſt admired productions of Pagan antiquity. If the imagery employed by the ſacred writers appear ſometimes to partake of a coarſe and indelicate caſt, it muſt be recollected, that the eaſtern manners and languages required the moſt forcible repreſentations; and that the maſculine and indignant ſpirit of the Prophets led them to adopt the moſt

[K] Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. c. iii. Porta Moſis, p. 52. et ſeq. and Pocock's notes, c. vi.

[L] Pocock. Notæ Miſcel. in Porta Moſis, c. vi. and Mede's Placita Doct. Hebræ, vol. ii. B. 3.

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energetic and deſcriptive expreſſions. No ſtile is perhaps ſo highly figurative as that of the Prophets. Every object of nature and of art which could furniſh alluſions, is explored with induſtry; every ſcene of creation, and every page of ſcience, ſeems to have unfolded its rich varieties to the ſacred writers, who in the ſpirit of eaſtern poetry, delight in every kind of metaphorical embelliſhment. Thus by way of illuſtration, it is obvious to remark, that earthly dignities and powers are ſymbolized by the celeſtial bodies; the effects of moral evil are ſhewn under the ſtorms and convulſions of nature; the pollutions of ſin are repreſented by external impurities; and the beneficial influence of righteouſneſs is depicted by the ſerenity and confidence of peaceful life [M]. This allegorical language being founded on ideas univerſally prevalent, and adhered to with invariable relation, and regular analogy, has furniſhed great ornament and elegance to the ſacred writings. Sometimes, however, the inſpired penmen drew their alluſions from local and temporary ſources of metaphor; from the peculiar ſcenery of their country; from the idolatries of heathen nations; from their own hiſtory and circumſtances; from the ſervice of their temple, and the ceremonies of their religion; from manners that have faded, and cuſtoms that have elapſed. Hence many appropriate beauties have

[M] Newton on Daniel. Jones's lectures on the figurative language of ſcripture. Vitringa in Eſaiam xxxiv. 4. Lancaſtar's Abridgment of Daubuz. Mede. Biſhop Hurd's 9th ſermon on Prophecy.

vaniſhed. Many deſcriptions, and many repreſentations, that muſt have had a ſolemn importance among the Jews, are now conſidered, from a change of circumſtance, in a degraded point of view. Hence, likewiſe, here and there a ſhade of obſcurity [N]. In general, however, the language of ſcripture, though highly ſublime and beautiful, is eaſy and intelligible to all capacities. The divine truth which it contains is deſcribed in the moſt clear and familiar manner; it aſſumes, as it were, the dreſs of mankind, and inſtructs us with the condeſcenſion and familiarity of human converſe. Not deſigned merely for the learned and the wiſe, it adopts a plain and perſpicuous language, which has all the graces of ſimplicity, and all the beauties of unaffected eloquence. In treating of heavenly things it reveals myſteries to which the human imagination could never have ſoared; and diſcloſes the attributes and conduct of God in repreſentations analogous to our ideas, without degrading them by any unworthy deſcription [O]. It preſents the divine perfections incarnate, as it were, to our apprehenſions, by the illuſtration of familiar images. Thus the human affections and corporeal properties which are aſcribed to the Deity in ſcrip-

[N] Bundy's Introduction to the Sacred Books.

[O] "Lex loquitur lingua filiorum hominum," was a Jewiſh remark. But it has been obſerved, that no ſenſes which ſavour of groſs corporiety, are aſcribed to God, as touching or taſting; it being agreed, ſays Maimonides, "Deum non compungi cum corporibus per contactum corporalem." Vid. Maimon. Par. I. c. xxvi. xxxiii. xlvii.

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ture, are level to the notions of the vulgar, and yet are readily underſtood by enlightened minds to be deſcriptive only of ſome correſpondent attributes that conſiſt with the excellency of the divine nature; ſo that when revelation accommodates its language to our reſtricted intellects, it is with ſuch faithful adherence to the real and eſſential properties of the Deity, and to the true character of heavenly things, that it is calculated to raiſe the conceptions, and not to debaſe the theme.

It remains to be obſerved, that the greateſt part of the prophetic books, as well as thoſe more eſpecially ſtiled poetical, was written in ſome kind of meaſure or verſe [P]; though the Jews of very early times appear to have been inſenſible of the exiſtence of any numerical arrangement in them [Q]. As the Hebrew has been a dead language for near 2000 years, and as it is deſtitute of vowels, we can have

[P] The hiſtorical relations interſperſed in theſe books are of courſe excluded from this remark. So likewiſe the book of Daniel, which is chiefly narrative, has nothing poetical, nor has that of Jonah, except the prayer, which is an ode. The grave and elevated prophecies of Ezekiel, (whom Biſhop Lowth has characterized as an orator rather than a poet) ſeem to reject metrical arrangement. The odes which are in the books of Iſaiah, Ezekiel, and Habakkuk, are of a diſtinct and peculiar ſpecies of poetry. Vid. Lowth's Prælect. 25, 26, 27, 28.

[Q] Moſt of the prophecies in the hiſtorical books are unqueſtionably written in ſome kind of meaſure, as thoſe of Noah, Jacob, and Balaam, and the divine hymn of Moſes in the thirty-ſecond chapter of Deuteronomy; all of which furniſh very beautiful ſpecimens of metrical poetry.

no power of aſcertaining the pronunciation, or even the number of its ſyllables. The quantity and rhythm of its verſe muſt therefore have entirely periſhed; and there can be no mode of diſcovering the rules by which they were governed [R]. That the Hebrew poetry in general, however, was controlled to ſome kind of meaſure, is evident; not only from the peculiar ſelection of unuſual expreſſions and phraſes, but alſo from the artificial arrangement, and regular diſtribution of many ſentences, which run in parallel diviſions, and correſpond, as it were, in equal periods; but whether this meaſure reſulted from the obſervance of certain definite numerical feet, or was regulated by the ear and the harmony of lines of ſimilar cadence, is uncertain [S]. The ſententious modulation, however, which in conſequence obtained, was ſo ſtrong, as to be transfuſed, and to predominate in our tranſlation. It is obſervable, alſo, that the meaſure is often varied; and even ſometimes

[R] The meaſure of the modern Jews is very different from that of the ſacred writings, and was probably borrowed from the Arabians.

[S] Lowth's Prælect. 3, and 19. et metricæ Harianæ Confut. The learned deny that correſpondence and ſimilitude between the Hebrew and the Grecian meaſures which St. Jerom, on the authority of Joſephus and Origen, maintained to exiſt. Vid. Prælect. 18. Bedford's Temple Muſick, ch. vi. Calmet, &c. The Hebrew language hardly admitted a tranſpoſition of words ſufficient for the Grecian meaſures; and it appears evident, that though the language abounds in ſimilar terminations, yet that rhime was not conſidered as neceſſary or ornamental in the Hebrew verſe.

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in the ſame poem, but with a propriety which appears from the effect to be always well adapted to the ſubject. There is nothing inconſiſtent with the nature of inſpiration, to ſuppoſe that its ſuggeſtions might be conveyed in numbers. The Prophets in the ordinary modes of propheſying, were accuſtomed to compoſe their hymns to the ſound of ſome muſical inſtrument [r]; and there could be but little difficulty in adapting their effuſions to a meaſure which required probably no great reſtrictions in a language ſo free and uncontrolled as the Hebrew. The Holy Spirit, likewiſe, while it quickened the invention of the Prophets, and fired their fancy, might enable them to obſerve the eſtabliſhed ſtile of compoſition.

The Prophets probably collected their own prophecies into their preſent form; though the author of the lives of the Prophets, under the name of Dorotheus, affirms in a very groundleſs aſſertion, that none but David and Daniel did; conceiving

[r] The Jews conceived that muſick calmed the paſſions, and prepared the mind for the reception of the prophetic influence. It is probable that the Prophets on theſe occaſions did not uſually perform themſelves on the muſical inſtruments, but rather accompanied the ſtrains of the minſtrel with their voice. Vid. 1 Sam. x. 5. 2 Kings iii. 15. 1 Chron. xxv. 1. Lowth's Prælect. Poet. 18. et ſeq. It has been the practice of all nations to adapt their religious worſhip to muſick, which the fabulous accounts of antiquity derived from heaven. Alting. Hiſt. Acad. Heb. p. 23. And Smidius de Cantu Eccleſ. V. et N. Teſt. Mart. Gibb. de Cantu & Muſica Sac. R. David Kimchi in 1 Sam. x. 5.

that the ſcribes of the temple received them as they were delivered, without order; but they were indiſputably compoſed and publiſhed by thoſe Prophets whoſe names they ſeverally bear [u]. As their genuine productions, they were received into the Jewiſh canon; and were read in the Jewiſh ſynagogues after the perſecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, when the reading of the law was interdicted; and continued ſo to be, to the days of our Saviour, from whoſe time they continued to be read in the Chriſtian churches [x]. They are with great propriety received into our churches as illuſtrating the grand ſcheme of prophecy, and as replete with the moſt excellent inſtruction of every kind. The predictions which they contain, were principally accompliſhed in the appearance of Chriſt. Some, however, which referred to the diſperſion and ſubſequent ſtate of the Jews, as well as to the condition of other nations, ſtill continue under our own eyes to be fulfilled, and will gradually receive their final and conſummate ratification in the reſtoration of the Jews, in the univerſal eſtabliſhment of Chriſt's kingdom [y], and in the

[u] Iſaiah xxx. 8. Jerem. xxx. 2. Habak. iii. 2, &c.

[x] Acts xiii. 15. When the reading of the Law was reſtored after this perſecution, the prophetic books furniſhed detached paſſages for a ſecond leſſon, ſelected with reference to the ſection read from the Law, and read by a different perſon. The prophecies were read only in the morning ſervice, and never on the Monday or Thurſday, which days were appropriated to the Law excluſively.

[y] A final reſtoration of the Jews, and a ſpiritual reign of Chriſt to prevail after that reſtoration, are ſuppoſed to be foretold

the ſecond advent of our Lord to "judge the world in righteouſneſs."

told in ſcripture, and were believed ſo to be from the earlieſt ages of the chriſtian church. Vid. Deut. xxx. 1—5. Iſaiah ii. 1—4. xi. xxx. 18—26. xxxiii. 20—24. xlix. 18—26. li. 3—23. liv. 11—14. lx. lxv. 17—25. Hoſea iii. 5. Joel ii. and iii. Amos ix. 11—15. Micah ii. 12. iv. 3—13. vii. 11—20. Zeph. iii. 8—20. Jerem. iii. 16—18. xvi. 15. xxiii. 3—8. xxx. 3—20. xxxi. 4—14, 35—40. xxxiii. 7—11. Ezek. xx. 40—44. xxviii. 25, 26. xxxiv. 26—29. xxxvi. xxxvii. xxxviii. and xxxix. Dan. vii. 26, 27. Zechar. viii. 7, 8. Rev. xx. and xxi. &c. paſſim. Vid. alſo Matt. xx. 21. Acts i. 6. iii. 21. Barnab. Epiſt. c. xv. Juſtin Martyr Dialog. cum Tryphon. Part II. p. 315. Edit. Thirlb. Iren. L. V. c. xxxii—xxxvi. Tertul. cont. Marcion. L. III. Eyre's Obſervat. on Prophecy. Wotton Pref. to Clem. Epiſt. p. 15. The doctrine of the Millenium may have been carried to an abſurd and unwarranted exceſs; but ſome of theſe prophecies, even if figuratively taken, are ſeemingly too magnificent to be reſtricted to the effects of the firſt advent of Chriſt, and promiſe at leaſt an effectual and univerſal eſtabliſhment of his ſpiritual influence.

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH.

ISAIAH, who was profeſſedly the author of this Book, and has been univerſally ſo conſidered, informs us, that he propheſied during the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, who ſucceſſively flouriſhed between A. M. 3194 and 3305. He ſtiles himſelf the ſon of Amoz, by whom we are not to underſtand the Prophet whoſe name is ſpelled Amos [A], and who was nearly coeval with Iſaiah himſelf. It has been ſuppoſed that Iſaiah was of the royal blood; and ſome have maintained that his father Amoz was the ſon of King Joaſh, and brother to Uzziah, or Azariah, King of Judah [B]. He certainly was of that tribe, and of

[A] The Prophet's name is ſpelt עמוס; that of the father of Iſaiah, אמוץ. Vid. Hieron. & Procop. in Eſai. i. 1. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. xviii. 27. Cyril. Præf. Expoſ. in Amos.

[B] R. Iſa. Abarb. Præf. in Iſaiah. Seder Olam Zuta, & in Gemar. Codic. Megil. fol. 10, col. 11. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. cap. ix. 4.

noble

noble birth; and the Rabbins pretend that his father was a Prophet, which they collect from a general rule eſtabliſhed among them: that the fathers of the Prophets were themſelves Prophets when their names are mentioned in ſcripture [c].

ISAIAH was the firſt of the four great Prophets, and is repreſented to have entered on the prophetic office in the laſt year of Uzziah's reign, about 758 years before Chriſt [D]. Some have ſuppoſed that he did not live beyond the fifteenth or ſixteenth year of Hezekiah's reign [E]; in which caſe he propheſied during a ſpace of about forty-five years. But others are of opinion, that he ſurvived Hezekiah, and that he was put to death in the reign of Manaſſeth. There is, indeed, a Jewiſh tradition, that he ſuffered martyrdom by command of that tyrant, in the firſt year of his reign, about 698 years before Chriſt, being cruelly ſawn aſunder with a wooden ſaw. On a ſuppoſition of the truth of this relation, we muſt allow that he propheſied during a ſpace of more than ſixty years [F].

SEVERAL of the fathers have, indeed, borne teſti-

[c] Hieron. in Eſai. xxxvii. 2. Epiphan. de Vita & Mort. Prophet. & Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. I.

[D] He was nearly contemporary with Hoſea, Joel, Amos, and Micah.

[E] Aben-Ezra Com. in Iſa. i. 1. He certainly lived beyond the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign. Vid. 2 Kings xx. 1.

[F] Jotham reigned ſixteen years, Ahaz ſixteen, and Hezekiah twenty-nine.

mony

mony to the tradition [G]; and St. Paul is generally ſuppoſed to have referred to it in his epiſtle to the Hebrews [H]. St. Juſtin the martyr affirmed, that the Jews had erafed the diſgraceful circumſtance from the ſacred books; and it is not improbable, that the bold ſpirit of invective, and the high character by which Iſaiah was diſtinguiſhed, might have irritated a jealous and revengeful monarch to this act of impious barbarity; though the opprobrium of the deed muſt be much aggravated, if St. Jerom be not miſtaken in relating, that Manaſſeth had received the daughter of Iſaiah in marriage [I]. It is added, alſo, that Manaſſeth endeavoured to juſtify his cruelty, by pretending that he condemned the Prophet for ſaying, that "he had ſeen the Lord ſitting upon a throne [K];" contrary, as the tyrant affirmed, to what is ſaid in Exodus, "there is no man ſhall ſee me, and live [L];" thus hypocritically attempting to veil his malice under an appearance of piety. However this may have been, the ſtory was certainly embelliſhed with many fictitious circumſtances; as, that the Prophet was ſawed aſunder in a cedar which had opened itſelf to receive him in his flight; and other

[G] Tertul. Lib. de Patien. ch. xiv. Orig. in Matt. & in Epiſt. ad Jul. African. & Hom. in Iſaia. Juſtin. cum Tryphon. Chryſoſt. ad Cyriac. Jerom Lib. V. in Eſai. Auguſt. de Civit. Lib. XVIII. cap. xxiv.

[H] Heb. xi. 37. and Pearce on this verſe.

[I] Hieron. in Eſai. iii.

[K] Chap. vi. 1.

[L] Exod. xxxiii. 20.

particulars

particulars fabricated in credulous reverence for his memory. Epiphanius and Dorotheus, who furniſh us with this account, add, that he was buried near Jeruſalem, under the oak Rogel, near the royal ſepulchre, on the river Siloe, at the ſide of Mount Sion; and that he remained in his tomb to their time; contrary to what others report of his being carried away to Paneada, towards the ſources of the Jordan; and from thence to Conſtantinople, in the thirty-fifth year of Theodoſius the younger, A. D. 442.

THE name of Iſaiah is, as Vitringa has remarked, in ſome meaſure deſcriptive of his character, ſince it ſignifies, "the ſalvation of Jehovah." He has always been conſidered as a Prophet of the higheſt eminence [M]; and looked up to as the brighteſt luminary of the Jewiſh church. He ſpeaks of himſelf as enlightened by viſion; and he has been emphatically ſtiled the evangelical Prophet [N], ſo copiouſly and clearly does he deſcribe the Meſſiah, and characterize his kingdom: favoured as it were, with an intimate view of the Goſpel ſtate, from the

[M] Matt. iv. 14. Rom. x. 16. xxviii. 25. Matt. viii. 17. Luke iv. 17. Acts xxviii. 25. alſo Vitringa's Proleg. p. 10. 2 Kings xix. 20. xx. 1, 2. et ſeq. 2 Chron. xxxii. 20. St. Paul cites his work as part of the Law. 1 Cor. xiv. 21.

[N] Hieron. Præf. in Eſaiam, Epiſt. xvii. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxix. Theod. Præf. in Eſai. Holden's Paraphraſe of Iſaiah. St. Jerom in his epiſtle to Pope Damaſus, ſays what was figuratively true, that the ſeraphin who touched Iſaiah's lips with fire, conveyed to him the New Teſtament. Iſa. vi. 6, 7.

very birth of our Saviour, "to be conceived of a virgin [o]," to that glorious and triumphant period, when every Gentile nation ſhall bring a clean offering to the Lord, and "all fleſh ſhall come to worſhip" before him [p]. The author of Eccleſiaſticus, in his fine and diſcriminating encomium on the Prophets, ſays of Iſaiah, that "he was great and faithful in his viſion;" and that "in his time the ſun went backward, and he lengthened the King's life. He ſaw by an excellent ſpirit what ſhould come to paſs at the laſt [q]." It is certain that Iſaiah, in addition to his other prophetic privileges, was inveſted with the power of performing miracles [r]. Beſides thoſe that are aſcribed to him in ſcripture, tradition relates, that he ſupplied the people beſieged under Hezekiah with water from Siloam, while the enemy could not procure it [s]. It is remarkable, that the wife of Iſaiah is ſtiled a propheteſs [t]; and the Rabbins maintain, that ſhe poſſeſſed the gift of prophecy. He himſelf appears to have been raiſed up as a ſtriking object of veneration among the Jews, and to have regulated his whole conduct in ſub-

[o] Chap. vii. 14.

[p] Chap. lxvi. 20, 23.

[q] Ecclus xlviii. 22, 25. Vid. alſo, Calmet's Pref. and Lowth's Prælect. 21.

[r] 2 Kings xx. 11. 2 Chron. xxxii. 31.

[s] Hence, as ſome have ſuppoſed, was the origin of the Pool of Siloam. The word Siloam implies ſent. Vid. John ix. 7. Every tradition relative to theſe intereſting characters is worth recording.

[t] Chap. viii. 3.

ſerviency

ſerviency to his ſacred appointment. His ſons, likewiſe, were for types [u], and figurative pledges of God's aſſurances; and their names [x] and actions were intended to awaken a religious attention in the perſons whom they were commiſſioned to addreſs, and to inſtruct. Iſaiah was animated with the moſt lively zeal for God's honour and ſervice. He was employed chiefly to preach repentance to Judah; though he occaſionally uttered prophecies againſt the ten tribes, which in his time conſtituted the ſeparate kingdom of Iſrael. In the prudent reigns of Uzziah and Jotham, the kingdom of Judah flouriſhed; but in the time of Ahaz, Iſaiah had ample ſubject for reproach, as idolatry was eſtabliſhed, even in the temple, and the kingdom nearly ruined by the impiety which the King had introduced and countenanced. In the reign of Hezekiah, his endeavours to reform the people were more ſucceſsful; and ſome piety prevailed, till the ſeduction of Manaſſeth completed the triumph of idolatry and ſin.

THERE are many hiſtorical relations ſcattered through this book, which illuſtrate the circumſtances and occaſions of the prophecies. The prophetical parts are ſometimes conſidered under five diviſions. The firſt part, which extends from the beginning to the thirteenth chapter, contains five diſcourſes immediately addreſſed to the Jews and Ephraimites; whom

[u] Iſaiah viii. 18.

[x] Shear Jaſhub ſignifies, "a remnant ſhall return." Maherſhalal-haſh-baz, implies, "run ſwiftly to the ſpoil." Vid. ch. vii. 3. viii. 1.

the

the Prophet addreſſes on various ſubjects, in various tones of exhortation and reproof. The ſecond part, which extends to the twenty-fifth chapter, contains eight diſcourſes, in which the fate of other nations, as of the Babylonians, Philiſtines, Moabites, Syrians, and Egyptians, is deſcribed. The third part, which terminates with the thirty-ſixth chapter, contains God's threats denounced againſt the diſobedient Jews, and enemies of the church, interſperſed with conſolatory promiſes to encourage thoſe who might deſerve God's favour [y]. The fourth part, which begins at the fortieth chapter, where the prophetic ſtrain is reſumed, deſcribes in four diſcourſes the manifeſtation of the Meſſiah, with many introductory and attendant circumſtances. This diviſion ends at the forty-ninth chapter. The fifth part, which concludes the prophecies, deſcribes more particularly the appearance of our Saviour, and the character of his kingdom. The hiſtorical part, which begins with the thirty-ſixth, and terminates with the thirty-ninth chapter [z], relates the remarkable events of thoſe times in which God employed the miniſtry of Iſaiah.

With reſpect to chronological arrangement, it

[y] Iſaiah, as well as Nahum, Haggai, and Zechariah, were deemed conſolatory Prophets. Vid. Abarb. Præf. in Iſai. fol. 2. col. 1. Lib. I.

[z] The abrupt concluſion of the thirty-eighth chapter, leads us to ſuppoſe that theſe hiſtorical chapters relating to Hezekiah, were inſerted from the Second Book of Kings, to illuſtrate the preceding prophecies. Comp. Iſa. xxxvi—xxxix. chapters, with 2 Kings xviii. 13. xx. 20.

muſt

muſt be obſerved, that the five firſt chapters appear to relate to the time of Uzziah [A]. The viſion deſcribed in the ſixth chapter muſt have happened early in the reign of Jotham. The next fifteen chapters contain the prophecies delivered under Ahaz; and the prophecies which follow to the end of the book, were probably uttered under Hezekiah. Some writers, however, have conceived, that the chapters have been accidentally deranged; and it is poſſible that the prophecies were not delivered by the Prophet exactly in the order in which they now ſtand. Others have attributed the diſlocations, if there be any, to the men of Hezekiah, who are ſaid to have collected theſe Prophecies [B].

When Iſaiah entered on the prophetic office, a darker ſcene of things began to ariſe. As idolatry predominated, and the captivity drew near, plainer declarations of God's future mercies were neceſſary to keep alive the expectations and confidence of the people. In treating of the captivities and deliverance of the Hebrew nation, the prophet is often led to conſider thoſe more important captivities and deliverances which theſe temporal events foreſhewed. Hence with promiſes of the firſt, he blends aſſurances

[A] Some think that they belong more properly to the reign of Ahaz. Vid. Taylor's Script. Divin. p. 328, but the deſcription of the reign of an apoſtate king would, perhaps, have been ſtill more forcible. Vid. 2 Kings xvi. 3. et ſeq. The deſcriptions are not too ſtrong for the time of Uzziah, whoſe individual virtues could not entirely reform the kingdom, or reſtore its proſperity. Vid. Hieron. Com. in Eſai. vi.

[B] Jacob. Brandinglerus in Alan. Typ. Lib. Proph. V. T.

of

of final reſtoration. From the bondage of Iſrael, he likewiſe adverts to the bondage under which the Gentile world was held by ignorance and ſin; and hence he exhibits in connected repreſentation, deliverance from particular afflictions, and the general deliverance from ſin and death. The preſent concern is often forgotten in the contemplation of the diſtant proſpect. The Prophet paſſes with rapidity from the firſt to the ſecond ſubject, without intimation of the change, or accurate diſcrimination of their reſpective circumſtances; as for inſtance, in the fifty-ſecond chapter, where the Prophet, after ſpeaking of the recovery from the Aſſyrian oppreſſion, ſuddenly drops the idea of the preſent redemption, and breaks out into a rapturous deſcription of the Goſpel ſalvation which it prefigured [c].

Among the prophecies of Iſaiah which deſerve to be particularly noted for their eſpecial perſpicuity and ſtriking accompliſhment, are thoſe in which he foretold the captivities of Iſrael and Judah [d]; and deſcribed the ruin and deſolation of Babylon [e], Tyre, and other nations. He ſpoke of Cyrus by name, and of his conqueſts, above 200 years before his birth [f], in

[c] Comp. Iſa. lii. 7. with Rom. x. 15. Iſa. xi. 10. with Rom. xv. 12. Vid. alſo, chap. xxxiv. xxxv. xl. xlix. Lowth on ch. lii. 13. and Abarbinel, as quoted by Vitringa, on ch. xlix. 1.

[d] Chap. xxxix. 6, 7. comp. with 2 Kings xxiv. 13. and Dan. i. 3.

[e] Chap. xiii. 19—22. xiv. 22—24. xlvii. 7, 8. and Lowth Com. & Uſſer. Ann. ad A. M. 3347. ch. xxiii.

[f] Chap. xliv. 28. xlv. 1—5. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XI. c. i.

in predictions which are ſuppoſed to have influenced that monarch to releaſe the Jews from captivity [G]; being probably ſhewn to him by Daniel. But it muſt be repeated, that his prophecies concerning the Meſſiah ſeem almoſt to anticipate the Goſpel hiſtory, ſo clearly do they foreſhew the divine character of Chriſt [H]; his miracles [I]; his peculiar qualities and virtues [K]; his rejection [L], and ſufferings for our ſins [M]; his death, burial [N], and victory over death [O]; and, laſtly, his final glory [P], and the eſtabliſhment, increaſe [Q], and perfection [R], of

c. i. St. Jerom has remarked that Xenophon's hiſtory is a good comment on the prophecies of Iſaiah. Vid. Hieron. ad Eſaiam xliv.

[G] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XI. c. i. Ezra i. 2.

[H] Chap. vii. 14. comp. with Matt. i. 18—23. and Luke i. 27—35. Chap. vi. ix. 6. xxxv. 4. xl. 5, 9, 10. xlii. 6—8. lxi 1. comp. with Luke iv. 18. lxii. 11. lxiii. 1—4.

[I] Chap. xxxv. 5, 6.

[K] Chap. xi. 2, 3. xl. 11. xliii. 1—3.

[L] Chap. vi. 9—12. comp. with Mark xiii. 14. Chap. vii. 14, 15. liii. 3.

[M] Chap. l. 6. liii. 4—11. The Ethiopian eunuch appears to have been made a proſelyte by St. Philip's explication of this chapter. Vid. Acts viii. 32. The whole of it is ſo minutely deſcriptive of Chriſt's paſſion, that a famous Rabbi, likewiſe, on reading it, was converted from Judaiſm.—Who, indeed, can reſiſt its evidence?

[N] Chap. liii. 8, 9.

[O] Chap. xxv. 8. liii. 10, 12.

[P] Chap. xlix. 7, 22, 23. lii. 13—15. liii. 4, 5.

[Q] Chap. ii. 2—4. ix. 7. xlii. 4. xlvi. 13.

[R] Chap. ix. 2, 7. xi. 4—10. xvi. 5. xxix. 18—24. xxxii. 1. xl. 4, 5. xlix. 9—13. li. 3—6. lii. 6—10. lv. 1—3. lix. 16—21. lx. lxi. 1—5. lxv. 25.

his kingdom; each ſpecifically pointed out, and pourtrayed with the moſt ſtriking and diſcriminating characters. It is impoſſible, indeed, to reflect on theſe, and on the whole chain of his illuſtrious prophecies, and not to be ſenſible that they furniſh the moſt inconteſtible evidence in ſupport of chriſtianity.

THE ſtile of Iſaiah has been univerſally admired as the moſt perfect model of the ſublime; it is diſtinguiſhed for all the magnificence, and for all the ſweetneſs of the Hebrew language [s]. The variety of his images, and the animated warmth of his expreſſions, characterize him as unequalled in point of eloquence; and if we were deſirous of producing a ſpecimen of the dignity and beauties of the ſcripture language, we ſhould immediately think of having recourſe to Iſaiah [t]. St. Jerom ſpeaks of him as

[s] See particularly the triumphant ode in chap. xiv. 4—27. which is inimitably beautiful. Vid. Lowth's Prælect. 28.

[t] The ſuperior eloquence of Iſaiah appears remarkably on a compariſon of the eleventh and thirty-fifth chapters of his work, with the fourth Eclogue of Virgil; in which the Poet has introduced thoughts, imagery, and diction, ſtrikingly ſimilar, indeed, to thoſe employed by Iſaiah, but infinitely inferior as to the effect produced. Virgil is ſuppoſed to have borrowed from the predictions of the Cumæan Sybil, that deſcription of the Golden Age which he repreſents as ready to commence with the birth of ſome illuſtrious perſonage (as, perhaps, the expected offſpring of Octavia, or of Scribonia.) The ideas, however, were ſo appropriate to the Meſſiah and his kingdom, that they muſt have been derived from a ſacred ſource, though it is not neceſſary to conſider them as the reſult of immediate inſpiration. The Sibylline verſes might have been inſpired prophecies ſpread abroad

as converſant with every part of ſcience [u]; and, indeed, the marks of a cultivated and improved mind are ſtamped in every page of his book; but theſe are almoſt eclipſed by the ſplendor of his inſpired knowledge. In the delivery of his prophecies and inſtructions, he utters his enraptured ſtrains with an elevation and majeſty that unhallowed lips could never have attained [x]. From the grand exordium in the firſt chapter, to the concluding deſcription of the Goſpel, to "be brought forth" in wonders, and to terminate in the diſpenſations of eternity: from firſt to laſt, there is one continued diſplay of inſpired wiſdom, revealing its oracles and precepts for the inſtruction of mankind. The prophecies of Iſaiah were modulated to a kind of rythm, and they are evidently divided into certain metrical ſtanzas or lines [y].

abroad in Greek verſe by the Helleniſtical Jews. Virgil might have collected ideas with regard to the expected Meſſiah, from the Jews in general, and particularly from Herod, who was about this time at Rome, and whoſe ſons were afterwards received by *Pollio* on an embaſſy there. Vid. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XV. c. xiii. Or, laſtly, the Poet, as other learned perſons among the Romans, might have had ſome knowledge of the Septuagint verſion of the ſcriptures, ſince they were inquiſitive after all kinds of literature. Vid. Lowth's Prælect. 21. Chandler's Vindic. ch. ii. ſect. 3. et Poſtſcript, p. 44. & Cudworth's Intel. Syſt. c. iv. § 16.

[u] Hieron. Præf. in Eſſai.

[x] Chap. vi. 6, 7.

[y] Vitringa Proleg. in Eſai. p. 8. Lowth's Preface, and Scaliger's Animad. in Chron. Euſeb.

THE Greek verſion of Iſaiah appears to have been made long after that of the Pentateuch; it is a very lax and inaccurate tranſlation, and was probably compoſed after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes [z].

ISAIAH, beſides this book of prophecies, wrote an account of the actions of Uzziah [A]; this has periſhed with ſome other writings of the Prophets, which, as probably not written by inſpiration, were never admitted into the canon of ſcripture. Some apocryphal books have likewiſe been attributed to him; among others, that ſo often cited by Origen and other fathers, entitled, the Aſcenſion of Iſaiah [B]; not to mention a later book, called the Viſion of Iſaiah [C], which is only a compilation from his works. Theſe are probably attributed to him on as inſufficient grounds as the books of Solomon and Job.

[z] Thoſe of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodoſion, are now loſt.

[A] 2 Chron. xxvi. 22. Dr. Kennicott fancies that Iſaiah compoſed the 89th Pſalm on the approach of Rezin and Pekah to Jeruſalem.

[B] Origen in Matt. xxiii. et Epiſt. ad African. Hieron. in Iſaiam 64. Epiphan. Hæres 40, and 67.

[C] This was publiſhed at Venice. Vid. Sixt. Senens, Bib. Sac. in Iſaiah.

OF

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH.

JEREMIAH was the ſon of Hilkiah; probably not of that Hilkiah [A] who was high prieſt in the reign of Joſiah, but certainly of ſacerdotal extraction; and a native of Anathoth, a village about three miles from Jeruſalem, appointed for the prieſts, in that part of Judæa which was allotted to the tribe of Benjamin [B]. He was called to the prophetic office, nearly at the ſame time with Zephaniah, in the thirteenth year of the reign of Joſiah the ſon of Amon, A. M. 3376. Like St. John the Baptiſt and St. Paul, he was even in his mother's womb ordained a Prophet to the Jews and other nations [C]. He was not, however, expreſsly addreſſed by the word of God till about the fourteenth year of his

[A] 2 Kings xxii. 4. Clemens Alexand. Strom. Lib. I. p. 390. edit. Oxon. Sixt. Senens.

[B] Hieron. Præf. in Prophet. Joſh. xxi. 13, 18. xviii. 28.

[C] Jerem. i. 6. and Hieron. in Hierem.

age; when he diffidently fought to decline the appointment on account of his youth, till influenced by the divine encouragement, he obeyed, and continued to prophefy upwards of forty years, during feveral fucceffive reigns of the degenerate defcendants of Jofiah; to whom he fearlefsly revealed thofe marks of the divine vengeance which their fluctuating and rebellious conduct drew on themfelves and their country [D]. After the deftruction of Jerufalem by the Chaldeans, he was fuffered by Nebuchadnezzar to remain and lament the miferies and defolation of Judæa, from whence he fent confolatory affurances to his captive countrymen. He was afterwards, as we are by himfelf informed, carried with his difciple Baruch, into Egypt [E], by Johanan the fon of Kareah, who contrary to his advice and prophetic admonitions, returned from Judæa.

MANY circumftances relative to Jeremiah, are interfperfed in his writings, and many more which deferve but little credit, have been recorded by the Rabbins and other writers [F]. He appears to

[D] Chap. xxi. 4—11. xxiv. 8—10. xxxii. 3, 4. xxxiv. 2—5. comp. with Ezek. xii. 13. and Jofeph. Antiq. Lib. XI. cap. x. Jer. xxxvi. 30, 31.

[E] Chap. xliii. 3—7. Abarbinel erroneoufly afferts that Jeremiah was carried into captivity with Jeconiah, or Jehoiachin; contrary to the Prophet's own account, Vid. Abarb. in Ezek.

[F] 2 Macc. ii. 1—7. Euſeb. Præp. Evang. Lib. IX. c. xxxix. Hieron. cont. Jovinian. Lib. II. Tertull. Adv. Gnoſt. c. viii.

have

have been expoſed to cruel and unjuſt perſecutions from the Jews, and eſpecially from thoſe of his own village [G], during his whole life, on account of the zeal and fervor with which he cenſured their incorrigible ſins; and he is ſometimes provoked to break out into the moſt feeling and bitter complaints of the treatment which he received [H]. The author of Eccleſiaſticus [I], alluding to his ſufferings, remarks, "that they intreated him evil, who nevertheleſs was a Prophet ſanctified in his mother's womb." According to the account of St. Jerom, he was ſtoned to death at Tahpanhes [K], a royal city of Egypt, about 586 years before the birth of Chriſt: either by his own countrymen, as is generally maintained, or by the Egyptians, to both of which people he had rendered himſelf obnoxious by the terrifying prophecies which he had uttered. The chronicle of Alexandria relates, that the Prophet had incenſed the Egyptians by predicting that their idols ſhould be overthrown by an earthquake, when the Saviour of the earth ſhould be born and placed in a manger. His prophecies, however, that are ſtill

[G] Chap. xi. 21. Luke iv. 24.

[H] Chap. xx. 7—18.

[I] Ecclus. xlix. 17.

[K] Jerem. xliii. 7, 9. Heb. xi. 37. Hieron. in ch. xxxiii. 9. Tahpanhes is contracted to Hanes by Iſaiah, ch. xxx. 4. It is ſuppoſed by many to have been the city which was afterwards called Daphnæ Peluſiacæ. Other traditions relate, that he was thrown into a pit, and transfixed with darts. Vid. Gregent. Diſput. cum Herban, Jud.

extant concerning the conqueſts of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar, "the ſervant of God," muſt have been ſufficient to excite the fears and hatred of thoſe againſt whom they were uttered. It was added to this account which Ptolemy received, that Alexander the Great, viſiting the tomb of Jeremiah, and hearing what he had predicted concerning his perſon, ordered that the Prophet's urn ſhould be removed to Alexandria, and built a magnificent monument to his memory [L]. This was ſoon rendered famous; and as a reverence for the Prophet's character encircled it with imaginary influence, it became celebrated as a place of miracles [M]. Other accounts, however, relate, that the Prophet returned unto his own country; and travellers are ſtill ſhewn a place in the neighbourhood of Jeruſalem, where, as they are told, Jeremiah compoſed his prophecies; and where Conſtantine erected a tomb to his memory.

JEREMIAH, who profeſſes himſelf the author of theſe prophecies [N], employed Baruch as his amanuenſis in committing them to writing [O]. He appears to have made at different times collections of what he had delivered. The firſt ſeems to have

[L] Abulfar. Hiſt. Orient. Dynaſt. III. Jean Moſque Pré. Spirituel, ch. lxxvii. Raleigh's Hiſt. of the World, B. II. p. 555.

[M] Crocodiles and ſerpents were ſuppoſed to be unable to live near it, and the duſt of the place is now deemed a cure for the bite of the aſp. Many other ſimilar fictions were engendered by ſuperſtitious reſpect for the Prophet's memory.

[N] Chap. i. 1, 4, 6, 9. xxv. 13. xxix. 1. xxx. 2. li. 60.

[O] Chap. iv. 32. xlv. 1.

been

been compoſed in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, when the Prophet was expreſsly commanded by God to write upon a roll all the prophecies that he had uttered concerning Iſrael, Judah, and other nations [P]; this he did by means of Baruch. But this roll being burnt by Jehoiakim [Q], another was written under Jeremiah's direction, with many additional particulars [R]. In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the prophet appears to have collected into one book all the prophecies that he had delivered before the taking of Jeruſalem [S]. To this probably he afterwards added ſuch farther revelations as he had occaſionally received during the government of Gedaliah, and during the reſidence in Egypt, the account of which terminates with the fifty-firſt chapter. The fifty-ſecond chapter, which is compiled from the five laſt chapters of the ſecond book of Kings [T], was probably not written by Jeremiah, as it contains in part a repetition of what the Prophet had before related in the thirty-ninth and fortieth chapters of his book, and ſome circumſtances which, as it has been ſuppoſed, did not happen till after the death of Jeremiah: and it is evident from the intimation con-

[P] Jerem. xxxvi. 2. xxv. 13.

[Q] Chap. xxxvi. 23. The Jews inſtituted an annual faſt in commemoration of the burning of this roll, which is ſtill obſerved in December, on the 29th day of the month Ciſleu. Vid. Prid. Par. I. Book I.

[R] Chap. xxxvi. 32.

[S] Chap. i. 3.

[T] 2 Kings xxiv. 18—20. xxv.

veyed

veyed in the laſt verſe (" thus far are the words of Jeremiah") that his book there terminates. The fifty-ſecond chapter was therefore probably added by Ezra [u], as an exordium to the Lamentations. It is, however, a very uſeful appendage, as it illuſtrates the accompliſhment of Jeremiah's prophecies relative to the captivity and the fate of Zedekiah.

THE prophecies, as they are now placed, appear not to be arranged in the chronological order in which they were delivered [x]. Whether they were originally ſo compiled by Jeremiah, or Ezra; or whether they have been accidentally tranſpoſed, cannot now be determined. It is generally maintained, that if we conſult the dates of their publication, they ſhould be placed thus:

In the reign of Joſiah, the twelve firſt chapters.

In that of Jehoiakim, chapters xiii.—xx. xxi. ver. 11—14. xxii. xxiii. xxv. xxvi. xxxv. xxxvi.—xlv.—xlix. 1—33. ver.

In that of Zedekiah, chap. xxi. 1—10. xxiv. xxvii.—xxxiv. xxxvii.—xxxix. xlix. ver. 34—39. l. and li.

Under the government of Gedaliah, chap. xl.—xliv.

JEREMIAH does not ſeem to have received any revelations from God in the ſhort intermediate reigns

[u] Sixtus Senenſis, without any juſt reaſon, attributes it to Baruch, Bib. Lib. I.

[x] Origen Epiſt. ad African. Hieron. Præf. in Jerem. Blayney's Tranſlat. of Jeremiah.

of

of Jehoahaz, the ſon of Joſiah, or of Jeconiah, the ſon of Jehoiakim.

THE prophecies which related to the Gentiles are contained in the forty-ſixth and five following chapters, being placed at the end, as in ſome meaſure unconnected with the others. But in ſome copies of the Septuagint [Y] theſe ſix chapters follow immediately after the thirteenth verſe of the twenty-fifth chapter. Though the Iſraelites had been carried captive before Jeremiah began to propheſy, he occaſionally addreſſed the ten tribes, as ſome remains of them were ſtill left in Samaria.

THE prophecies of Jeremiah, of which the circumſtantial accompliſhment is often ſpecified in the Old and New Teſtament, are of a very diſtinguiſhed and illuſtrious character. He foretold the fate of Zedekiah [Z]; the Babyloniſh captivity; the preciſe time of its duration; and the return of the Jews [A]. He deſcribed the deſtruction of Babylon; and the downfal of many nations [B]; in predictions, of which the gradual and ſucceſſive completion kept up the confidence of the Jews for the accompliſhment of thoſe prophecies which he delivered relative to the Meſſiah

[Y] As in the Vatican and Alexandrian.

[Z] Chap. xxxiv. 2—5. comp. with 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19. 2 Kings xxv. 5. and Jerem. lii. 11.

[A] Chap. xxv. 11, 12. comp. with Dan. ix. 2. xxix. 10. Ezra i. ch. 1. Prid. Con. Ann. 518. Newton's eighth and eleventh Differt. on the Prophecies.

[B] Chap. xxv. 12. Vid. alſo, ch. ix. 26. xxv. 19—25. xlii. 10—18. xlvi. and following chapters. And Newton's Differt. XII.

and

and his period [C]. He foreſhewed the miraculous conception of Chriſt [D]; the virtue of his atonement; the ſpiritual character of his covenant; and the inward efficacy of his laws [E]. Jeremiah, contemplating thoſe calamities which impended over his country, repreſented in the moſt deſcriptive terms, and under the moſt expreſſive images, the deſtruction that the invading enemy ſhould produce. He bewailed in pathetic expoſtulation, the ſhameleſs adulteries which had provoked the Almighty, after long forbearance, to threaten Judah with inevitable puniſhment, at the time that falſe prophets deluded the nation with the promiſes of "aſſured peace," and when the people, in impious contempt of "the Lord's word," defied its accompliſhment. Jeremiah intermingles with his prophecies ſome hiſtorical relations relative to his own conduct, and to the completion of thoſe predictions which he had delivered. The reputation of Jeremiah had ſpread among foreign nations, and his prophecies were deſervedly celebrated in other countries [F]. Many heathen writers have likewiſe undeſignedly borne teſtimony to the truth and accuracy of his prophetic and hiſtorical deſcriptions [G].

[C] Chap. xxiii. 5, 6. xxx. 9. xxxi. 15. xxxiii. 14—18. xxxiii. 9. 26. Huet. Demon. Evan. Prop. VII. § 16.

[D] Chap. xxxi. 22.

[E] Chap. xxxi. 31—36. xxxiii. 8.

[F] Alex. Polyhiſt. in Euſeb. Præp. Evan. Lib. IX.

[G] Vid. Herodotus, Xenophon Cyropæd. Joſeph. cont. Apion, Lib. I. Compare particularly the accounts of the taking of Babylon, as deſcribed prophetically by Jeremiah in chap. li. and hiſtorically by Herodotus, Lib. I.

THE

THE ſtyle of Jeremiah, though not deficient either in eloquence or ſublimity, has been conſidered as inferior in both reſpects to that of Iſaiah [H]. St. Jerom [I] objects a certain ruſticity of expreſſion to him; but this it would not be eaſy to point out. His images are, perhaps, leſs lofty, and his expreſſions leſs dignified than thoſe of ſome others of the ſacred writers; but the character of his work, which breathes a tenderneſs of ſorrow calculated to awaken and intereſt the milder affections, led him to reject the majeſtic and declamatory tone in which the prophetic cenſures were ſometimes conveyed. The holy zeal of the Prophet is, however, often excited to a very vigorous eloquence in inveighing againſt the frontleſs audacity with which men gloried in their abominations [K]. The firſt part of the book is chiefly poetical, and, indeed, near one half of the work is written in ſome kind of meaſure. The hiſtorical part, towards the middle of the work, is written with much ſimplicity of ſtile. The ſix laſt chapters, which are entirely in verſe, contain ſeveral

[H] Lowth's Prælect. 21.

[I] Hieron. Præf. and Com. in Jerem. Cunæus de Repub. Hebr. Lib. III. cap. vii.

[K] The Prophet is very animated in his admonitions againſt idolatry, being willing to caution the people againſt the temptations which they would encounter in the captivity. It is remarkable, that the eleventh verſe of the tenth chapter, which contains a pious ſentiment which the Jews are directed to utter as a profeſſion of their faith, is written in Chaldee; that they might be furniſhed with the very words that they ſhould anſwer to thoſe who would ſeduce them.

predictions delivered in a high ſtrain of ſublimity. The deſcriptions of Jeremiah have all the vivid colourings that might be expected from a painter of contemporary ſcenes. The hiſtorical part has ſome characters of antiquity that aſcertain the date of its compoſition. The months are reckoned by numbers; a mode which did not prevail after the captivity, when they were diſtinguiſhed by Chaldaic names. The eleventh verſe of the tenth chapter is written in Chaldee. There are likewiſe a few Chaldaic expreſſions, which about the time of Jeremiah muſt have begun to vitiate the Hebrew language.

JEREMIAH has been ſometimes conſidered as an appointed Prophet of the Gentiles [L]. He certainly delivered many prophecies relative to foreign nations. His name implies the exaltation of the Lord; and his whole life was ſpent in endeavouring to promote God's glory. His reputation was ſo conſiderable, that ſome of the fathers [M] fancifully ſuppoſed that as his death is nowhere mentioned in ſcripture, he was living in the time of Chriſt, whom, as the Goſpel informs us, ſome ſuppoſed to have been this Prophet [N]. They likewiſe applied to him and Elias what St. John myſteriouſly ſpeaks of two witneſſes that ſhould propheſy 1260 days [O];

[L] Chap. i. 5—10.

[M] Victorin. in Apoc. cap. xi. 3. Plures apud Hilar. in Matt. can. xx.

[N] Matth. xvi. 14.

[O] Rev. xi. 3.

which

which ſuperſtitious fictions ſerve, at leaſt, to prove the traditional reverence that was entertained for the memory of the Prophet; who long afterwards continued to be venerated in the Romiſh church as one of the greateſt ſaints that had flouriſhed under the old covenant: as having lived not only with the general ſtrictneſs of a Prophet, but, as was believed, in a ſtate of celibacy [P]; and as having terminated his righteous miniſtry by martyrdom.

[P] Chap. xvi. 2. How far the reſtriction here enjoined was of a typical, or temporary and local nature, is uncertain. The Chaldee Paraphraſe ſuppoſes the Prophet to have had children, Vid. Com. on Jerem. xxxvii. 12.

OF

OF THE

BOOK OF THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

THE Jews denominate this book Echah [A], from the firſt word of the text; or ſometimes they call it Kinnoth [B], which implies tears, alluding to the mournful character of the work, of which one would conceive, ſays Lowth, "that every letter was written with a tear, every word the ſound of a broken heart [C]." The Book was compoſed by Jeremiah, as he informs us in the title, and as the unvaried tradition of the church declares. The ſtile, indeed, itſelf, indicates the ſame hand which compoſed the preceding book. Upon what occaſion theſe Lamentations were produced, cannot be poſitively determined. In the ſecond book of Chronicles [D], it is ſaid, that "Jeremiah lamented for

[A] אֵיכָה, Echah How.
[B] קִינוֹת, Kinnoth, θρῆνοι, Lamentations, or tears.
[C] Gregor. Nazianz. Orat. xii.
[D] 2 Chron. xxxv. 25.

Joſiah;"

Josiah;" and Josephus [E], and other writers [F], suppose that the work which we now possess was written upon the occasion of that monarch's death: maintaining that the calamities which only three months after, attended the deposition of Jehoahaz were so considerable as to correspond with the description of the Prophet, though they are not minutely detailed in sacred history. The generality of the commentators, are however of a different opinion; and, indeed, Jeremiah here bewails the desolation of Jerusalem; the captivity of Judah; the miseries of famine; and the cessation of all religious worship, in terms so forcible and pathetic, that they appear rather applicable to some period after the destruction of Jerusalem [G], when, agreeably to his own predictions, every circumstance of complicated distress overshadowed Judæa [H]. But upon whatever occasion these Lamentations were composed, they are evidently descriptive of past events, and cannot be considered as prophetic elegies.

Some Jewish writers imagined, that this was the book which Jeremiah dictated to Baruch, and which

[E] Joseph. Antiq. Jud. Lib. X. c. vi.

[F] Hieron. in Lament. R. Selom. Lament. ch. iv. 20. Michaelis note in Prælect. 23. Usser. Annal. A. M. 3394. & Lam. ch. v. 7. which Michaelis considers as a complaint more just and reasonable in the time of Josiah than in that of Zedekiah.

[G] Chap. i. 1, 3, 6, 12, 18. ii. 2, 5, 6, 7, 16. iv. 6, 10, 22. v. 6, 18.

[H] Chap. xx. 4. may allude to the fate of Zedekiah.

was cut and burnt by Jehoiakim [I]. But there is no foundation for this opinion, for the book dictated to Baruch contained many prophetic threats [K] againſt various nations of which there are no traces in this book. In the Greek, Arabic, and Vulgate verſions of this book, there is a ſpurious argument, which is not in the Hebrew, nor in the Chaldee paraphraſe, any more than in the verſion of St. Jerom, who followed the Hebrew. It may be thus tranſlated: "It came to paſs, that after Iſrael had been carried away captive, and Jeruſalem became deſolate, the Prophet Jeremiah ſat weeping, and bewailed Jeruſalem with this lamentation, and bitterly weeping and mourning, ſaid as follows." This was probably added by the Greek tranſlators, in lieu of the fifty-ſecond chapter of Jeremiah's prophecies, which they rejected from this to the preceding book [L]. The Lamentations were certainly annexed originally to the prophecies of Jeremiah, and were admitted with them together into the Hebrew canon as one book. The modern Jews, however, place this work in their copies among other ſmaller tracts, ſuch as Ruth, and Canticles, &c. at the end of the Pentateuch: having deranged the books of ſcripture from the order which they held in Ezra's collection.

WITH reſpect to the plan of this work, it is compoſed after the manner of funeral odes, though without any very artificial diſpoſition of its ſubject. It

[I] Jerom. xxxvi. 4—23.
[K] Chap. xxxvi. 2.
[L] Huet, Prop. IV. cap. xiv.

appears

appears to contain the genuine effuſions of real grief; in which the author, occupied by his ſorrow, attends not to exact connection between the different rhapſodies, but pours out whatever preſents itſelf. He dwells upon the ſame ideas, and amplifies the ſame thoughts, by new expreſſions and figures, as is natural to a mind intent on ſubjects of affliction. There is, however, no wild incoherency in the contexture of the book; the tranſitions are eaſy and elegant; but it is in fact a collection of diſtinct ſentences, probably uttered at different times, upon the ſame ſubject, which are properly intitled Lamentations.

THE work is divided into five parts: in the firſt, ſecond, and fourth chapters, the Prophet ſpeaks in his own perſon; or by a very elegant and intereſting perſonification, introduces Jeruſalem as ſpeaking [M]. In the third chapter, a chorus of the Jews ſpeaks as one perſon, like the Coryphæus of the Greeks. In the fifth, which forms a kind of epilogue to the work, the whole nation of the captive Jews is introduced in one body, as pouring out complaints and ſupplications to God. Each of theſe five parts is diſtributed into twenty-two periods or ſtanzas, in correſpondence with the number of the Hebrew letters. In the three firſt chapters, theſe periods are

[M] In the firſt verſe, Jeruſalem is deſcribed as ſitting penſive and ſolitary, as Judæa was afterwards repreſented on the coins of Veſpaſian and Titus. Sitting was a natural poſture of ſorrow; and the picture of ſedentary affliction was familiar to the Jews. Vid. Job ii. 13. Pſa. cxxxvii. 1. Ezek. iii. 15. Addiſon's Diſſ. on Medals.

triplets, or conſiſt of three lines [N]. In the four firſt chapters, the initial letter of each period follows the order of the alphabet; and in the third chapter, each verſe of the ſame ſtanza begins with the ſame letter [O]. In the fourth chapter, all the ſtanzas are evidently diſtiches [P], as alſo in the fifth, which is not acroſtick. The intention of this acroſtick, or alphabetic arrangement, was to aſſiſt the memory in retaining ſentences not much connected [Q], and the ſame method was adopted, and is even ſtill uſed by the Syrians, Arabians, and Perſians [R]. It is remarkable alſo, that though the verſes of the fifth chapter are ſhort, yet thoſe of the other chapters ſeem to be nearly half as long again as thoſe which uſually occur in Hebrew poetry; and the Prophet appears to have choſen this meaſure as more flowing, and accommodated to the effuſions of ſorrow, and

[N] There is, however, in each of the two firſt chapters, one tetracolon, or ſtanza of four verſes, in cap. i. ר, in cap. ii. p. פ.

[O] The third chapter has 66 verſes in our tranſlation, becauſe each of the twenty-two periods is divided into three verſes, according to the initial letters. It is remarkable, that in the ſecond, third, and fourth chapters, the initial letter ב is placed before ע, contrary to the order obſerved in the alphabet, and in the firſt chapter, as well as in the acroſtick Pſalms.

[P] The ſtanza ד, as now read, cannot be divided into two or three verſes.

[Q] The Lamentations appear to have been ſung in publick ſervice. Vid. Lowth's Prælect. 22. and Preface to Iſaiah, p. 31.

[R] Aſſemani Bibliothec. Oriental. vol. iii. p. 63, 180, 188, 328.

perhaps

perhaps as more agreeable to the nature of funeral dirges [s].

This poem affords the moſt elegant variety of affecting images that ever probably were collected into ſo ſmall a compaſs [t]. The ſcenes of affliction, the circumſtances of diſtreſs, are painted with ſuch beautiful combination, that we contemplate every where the moſt affecting picture of deſolation and miſery. The Prophet reiterates his complaints in the moſt pathetic ſtile; and aggravates his ſorrow with a boldneſs and force of deſcription that correſpond with the magnitude and religious importance of the calamities diſplayed to view. In the inſtructive ſtrain of an inſpired writer, he reminds his countrymen of the grievous rebellions that had provoked the Lord to "abhor his ſanctuary;" confeſſes that it was of God's mercies that they were not utterly conſumed; and points out the ſources of evil in the iniquities of their falſe prophets and prieſts. He then with indignant irony threatens Edom with deſtruction for rejoicing over the miſeries of Judæa; opens a conſolatory proſpect of deliverance and future protection to Zion; and concludes with an affecting addreſs to God, to "conſider the reproach" of his people, and to renew their proſperity.

It is worthy to be obſerved, that Jeremiah in endeavouring to promote reſignation in his countrymen,

[s] The Lamentations which occaſionally occur, appear all to be compoſed of this long meaſure, which may be ſuppoſed to have been properly the elegiac meaſure of the Hebrews.

[t] Lowth's Prælect. 22.

repreſents his own deportment under afflictions, in terms which have a prophetic caſt, ſo ſtrikingly are they deſcriptive of the patience and conduct of our Saviour under his ſufferings [u]. The Prophet, indeed, in the meek endurance of unmerited perſecution, was an illuſtrious type of Chriſt.

JEREMIAH is repreſented in ſome titles to have been the author of the 137th Pſalm [x]; as likewiſe to have compoſed the 65th [y] in conjunction with Ezekiel; but probably neither of them were the production of his pen. The author of the ſecond book of Maccabees [z], ſpeaks of ſome recorded inſtructions of the Prophet, which are no longer extant. In the Vatican library are ſome compoſitions in Greek, attributed to the Prophet, containing ſpurious letters from Baruch and Abdemelech to the Prophet, and ſuppoſititious anſwers from him.

[u] Chap. iii. 1—30.

[x] This is aſcribed to him in ſome Latin copies, as it formerly was in ſome Greek manuſcripts; but it ſeems to have been written by ſome captive at Babylon.

[y] The titles in the Greek and Latin copies which aſſign this Pſalm to Jeremiah and Ezekiel, are of no authority. The Pſalm was probably written by David, upon the occaſion of ſome gracious rain after a drought, or perhaps by Haggai, or ſome Prophet after the return from the captivity. Vid. Calmet.

[z] 2 Macc. ii. 1—7.

OF

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET

EZEKIEL.

EZEKIEL, who was the third of the great Prophets, was the ſon of Buzi, a deſcendant of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi, that is, of the ſacerdotal race. He is ſaid to have been a native of Sarera [A], and to have been carried away captive to Babylon with Jehoiachin, King of Judah, A. M. 3406. He ſettled, or was placed, with many others of his captive countrymen, on the banks of the Chebar [B], a river of Meſopotamia; where he was favoured with the divine revelations which are deſcribed in this book. He is ſuppoſed to have propheſied during a period of twenty-one years. He appears to have been mercifully raiſed up to animate the deſpondence of his contemporaries in

[A] Pſeudo-Epiphan. in Vit. Prophet.

[B] Called by Ptolemy and Strabo, Chaboras, or Aboras; and by Pliny, Cobaris, Lib. I. cap. xxvi. It flows into the eaſt ſide of the Euphrates at Circeſium, or Carchemiſh, almoſt 200 miles to the north of Babylon.

their ſufferings and afflictions; and to aſſure them that they were deceived in ſuppoſing, according to the repreſentations of falſe prophets, that their countrymen who remained in Judæa were in happier circumſtances than themſelves; and with this view he deſcribes that melancholy ſcene of calamities which was about to ariſe in Judæa; and thence he proceeds to predict the univerſal apoſtacy of the Jews, and the total deſtruction of their city and temple; adverting alſo, occaſionally, to thoſe puniſhments which awaited their enemies; and interſperſing aſſurances of the final accompliſhment of God's purpoſe, with prophetic declarations of the advent of the Meſſiah, and with promiſes of the final reſtoration of the Jews.

THE name of Ezekiel [c] was happily expreſſive of that inſpired confidence and fortitude which he diſplayed, as well in ſupporting the adverſe circumſtances of the captivity, as in cenſuring the ſins and idolatrous propenſities of his countrymen. He began to deliver his prophecies about eight or ten years after Daniel, in the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity; and as ſome have ſuppoſed, in the thirtieth year of his age [d].

THE

[c] Ezekiel, יחזקאל. Fortitudo Dei vel Apprehenſio Dei.

[d] Ezek. i. 1. Hieron. in loc. &c. Uſher, Prideaux, and others, reckon the 30 years here ſpoken of, as well as the 40 days or years mentioned in chap. iv. 6. from the time of the covenant made by Joſiah in the 18th year of his reign. Vid. 2 Kings xxiii. 3. according to which computation this thirtieth year correſponds with A. M. 3410, and the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity. Other chronologiſts, however, conceive it to

THE divine inſtructions were firſt revealed to him in a glorious viſion, in which he beheld a repreſentation, or as he himſelf reverently expreſſes it, "the appearance of the likeneſs of the glory of the Lord," attended by his cherubims ſymbolically pourtrayed. "The word of the Lord came expreſsly" unto him, and he received his commiſſion by a voice, which was followed by a forcible influence of the ſpirit, and by awful directions for his conduct [E]. He appears to have executed his high truſt with great fidelity. The author of Eccleſiaſticus [F] ſays of him, that "he directed them who went right;" which may be conſidered as a merited encomium on the induſtry with which he endeavoured to inſtruct and guide his countrymen to righteouſneſs. He is reported by ſome writers to have preſided in the government of the tribes of Gad and Dan in Aſſyria; and among other miracles to have puniſhed them for idolatry by a fearful deſtruction produced by ſerpents. In addition to theſe popular traditions it is reported, that his countrymen were ſo incenſed by his reproaches as to put him to a cruel death [G]. In the time of Epiphanius it was generally believed that his remains were depoſited in the ſame ſepulchre with thoſe of

to be the thirtieth year of Ezekiel's age; or the thirtieth year of Nebupolaſſer's reign; and others the thirtieth year from the Jubilee. Vid. Uſher ad A. M. 3409. Prid. An. A. C. 594. Scaliger Can. Iſag. p. 28. Ezekiel uſually dates his prophecies from the æra of his appointment to the prophetic office.

[E] Chap. i. ii. and iii.

[F] Eccluſ xlix. 9. & Arnald.

[G] Hieron. in Ezech. xii.

Shem

Shem and Arphaxad, which was ſituated between the river Euphrates and that of Chaboras, in the land of Maur; and it was much reſorted to [H], not only by the Jews, but alſo by the Medes and Perſians: who reverenced the tomb of the Prophet with a ſuperſtitious devotion.

THE authenticity of Ezekiel's book will admit of no queſtion. He repreſents himſelf as the author in the beginning and other parts of it, and juſtly aſſumes the character and pretenſions of a Prophet [I]; as ſuch he has been univerſally conſidered. A few writers, indeed, of very inconſiderable authority, have fancied, from the firſt word of the Hebrew text, which they conſider as a connexive particle, that what we poſſeſs of Ezekiel is but the fragment of a larger work. But there is no ſhadow of foundation for this conjecture, ſince it was very cuſtomary to begin a diſcourſe in that language with the particle vau [K], which we properly tranſlate, "Now it came to paſs." It has been aſſerted, likewiſe, on Talmudical authority, that certain Rabbins deliberated concerning the rejection of this book from the

[H] Benjamin Tudela relates, that a magnificent roof was built to it by Jechoniah and 30,000 Jews, and decorated with images of Jechoniah, Ezekiel, and others; likewiſe, that a ſynagogue and library were erected there, in which was depoſited a manuſcript of Ezekiel's prophecies that was read on the day of expiation. The pretended tomb of Ezekiel is ſtill ſhewn about fifteen leagues from Bagdad.

[I] Chap. i. 1. ii. 2, 5. Clem. 1ſt Epiſ. Cor. c. 17.

[K] Jonah. i. 1. and the beginning of moſt of the hiſtorical books of ſcripture, alſo Calmet Preface ſur Ezechiel.

canon,

canon, on account of ſome paſſages in it which they conceived to be contradictory to the principles of the Moſaic law [L]. If they had any ſuch intention, they were ſoon convinced of their miſtake, and gave up the deſign. But the Jews, indeed, did not ſuffer the book, or at leaſt the beginning of it, to be read by any who had not attained their thirtieth year [M]; and reſtrictions were impoſed upon commentators who might be diſpoſed to write upon it [N].

St. Jerom hath remarked, certainly with great truth, that the viſions of Ezekiel are ſometimes very myſterious, and of difficult interpretation, and that they may be reckoned among the things in ſcripture which are "hard to be underſtood [O]." Ezekiel himſelf, well aware of the myſterious character of thoſe repreſentations which he beheld in viſion, and of the neceſſary obſcurity which muſt attend the deſcription of them to others, humbly repreſented to

[L] Comp. Ezek. xviii. 20. with Exod. xxxiv. 7. The people whom Ezekiel addreſſed, preſumptuouſly complained that they were puniſhed for the ſins of their forefathers, though, in truth, they had merited their captivity by perſiſting in evil. God therefore, very conſiſtently with his former declarations, threatens by Ezekiel to make ſuch diſtinction between the righteous and the wicked, that each man ſhould be ſenſible of having deſerved his ſufferings. And he aſſures the people, with eſpecial reference to eternal puniſhment, that "the ſoul that ſinned ſhould die;" and that "the ſon ſhould not bear the iniquity of the father;" that each ſhould be reſponſible only for his own conduct.

[M] Calmet's Dict. Herbelot. Bibliot. Orient. p. 942.

[N] Cunæus de Rep. Heb. 17.

[O] Hieron. Prol. in Ezech. and Prol. Gal.

God

God that the people accuſed him of ſpeaking darkly "in parables [P]." It appears to have been God's deſign to cheer the drooping ſpirits of his people, but only by communicating ſuch encouragement as was conſiſtent with a ſtate of puniſhment, and calculated by indiſtinct intimations, to keep alive a watchful and ſubmiſſive confidence. For this reaſon, perhaps, were Ezekiel's prophecies, which were revealed amidſt the gloom of captivity, deſignedly obſcure in their nature; but though myſterious in themſelves, they are related by the Prophet in a plain and hiſtorical manner. He ſeems to have been deſirous of conveying the ſtrong impreſſions which he received, as accurately as they were capable of being deſcribed.

THE repreſentations which Ezekiel beheld in viſion, are capable of a very intereſting and inſtructive illuſtration from other parts of ſcripture: as may be ſeen in the commentaries of various writers who have undertaken to explain their alluſive character, and the figurative directions which the Prophet received in them with relation to his own conduct, were very conſiſtent with the dignity of his character, and the deſign of his miſſion. Some of theſe directions were given, indeed, only by way of metaphorical inſtruction; for when Ezekiel is commanded to "eat the roll of prophecy," we readily underſtand that he is enjoined only to receive, and thoroughly to digeſt its contents [Q]; and when he profeſſes to have com-

[P] Ezek. xx. 49.
[Q] Vid. Rev. x. 8—10.

plied

plied with the command, we perceive that he ſpeaks only of a tranſaction in viſion. With reſpect to ſome other relations of this nature contained in Ezekiel's book [R], whether we ſuppoſe them to be deſcriptive of real or imaginary events, they are very reconcileable with divine intention in the employment of the Prophet. On a ſuppoſition that they were real, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe a miraculous aſſiſtance to have been afforded when neceſſary; and if we conſider them as imaginary, they might be repreſented equally as emblematical forewarnings revealed to the Prophet [S].

THE Book of Ezekiel is ſometimes diſtributed by the following analyſis, under different heads. After the three firſt chapters, in which the appointment of the Prophet is deſcribed, the wickedneſs and impending puniſhment of the Jews, eſpecially of thoſe remaining in Judæa, are repreſented under different parables and viſions, to the twenty-fourth chapter, incluſive. From thence to the thirty-ſecond chapter, the Prophet turns his attention to thoſe nations who had unfeelingly triumphed over the Jews in their affliction: predicting that deſtruction of the Ammonites, Moabites, and Philiſtines, which

[R] In the general preface to the Prophets, Ezekiel is ſuppoſed to have actually removed his houſhold ſtuff, as thus propheſying by a ſign; and this ſuppoſition ſeems to be authorized by the account. Vid. Ezek. xii. 7. and Waterland in Ezek. So, alſo, when deprived of his wife, he certainly refrained from the cuſtomary ſhew of grief, as a ſign of the unprecedented and inexpreſſible ſorrow under which the Jews ſhould pine away on the deſtruction of their temple. Vid. chap. xxiv. 16. et ſeq.

[S] Chap. iv. and v.

Nebu-

Nebuchadnezzar effected; and particularly, he foretels the ruin and desolation of Tyre [T] and of Sidon; the fall of Egypt [U], and the base degeneracy of its future people, in a manner so forcible, in terms so accurately and minutely descriptive of their several fates and present condition, that nothing can be more interesting than to trace the accomplishment of these prophecies in the accounts which are furnished by historians and travellers.

From the thirty-second to the fortieth chapter, Ezekiel inveighs against the hypocrisy and murmuring spirit of his captive countrymen: encouraging them to resignation by promises of deliverance [X], and by intimations of spiritual redemption [Y]. In the two last chapters of this division, under the promised victories to be obtained over Gog and Magog [Z], he undoubtedly predicts the final return of the Jews

[T] Ezek. xxvi. xxvii. and xxviii. Joseph. Antiq. Lib. X. cap. xi. cont. Apion, Lib. I. Newton's XIth Dissert. on Prophecy. Prid. Con. An. 573. Shaw's Travels, p. 330. Maundrell, p. 48, 49. Volney, vol. ii. ch. xxix. Bruce's Travels, Introd. p. 59.

[U] Chap. xxix. and xxx. Newton's Dissert. XII. and every history, and every account of Egypt. Herodotus particularly relates the accomplishment of those prophecies which Jeremiah and Ezekiel uttered concerning Hophra, king of Egypt. Vid. Jerem. xliv. 30. and Herod. Lib. II. Hophra is called Apries by Herodotus, who, says the historian, *was destined to misfortune*. See also the Testimonies of Megasthenes and Berosus in Newton.

[X] Chap. xxxvi. 11. xxxvii. 12, 14, 21.

[Y] Chap. xxxiv. 4. xxiii. et seq. xxxvii. 24. et seq.

[Z] Rev. xx. 7, 8. Some conceive that these prophecies of Ezekiel related to the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes. Calmet

Jews from their diſperſion, in the latter days; with an obſcurity, however, that can be diſperſed only by the event.

THE nine laſt chapters of this book furniſh the deſcription of a very remarkable viſion of a new temple and city; of a new religion and polity, under the particulars of which is ſhadowed out the eſtabliſhment of a future univerſal church [A]. Joſephus ſays,

Calmet applies them to Cambyſes. Gog is, however, generally ſuppoſed to repreſent the Turks; who derive their origin from the Tartars, a race of the Scythians, who were the deſcendants of Magog, the ſon of Japhet. Vid. Gen. x. 2. The word Gog appears to be applied to the people, and Magog to the land. We learn from Pliny, that Scythopolis and Hieropolis were always called Magog, after they were taken by the Scythians. The other Prophets ſpeak of ſome future enemy of the Jews and church under a ſimilar deſcription; but in what manner this magnificent prophecy is to receive its completion time only can explain. Vid. Lowth in loc. Jerem. xxvii. and xxx. Joel iii. Micah v. Rev. xx. Mede conceives that the Gog and Magog mentioned in the Revelation of St. John, preſignify ſome enemies different from thoſe foretold under theſe names by Ezekiel; and that St. John's prophecies apply to ſome unconverted heathens to appear in oppoſition to the church towards the concluſion of the Miſſenium. Vid. de Gog et Mag. Conject. Mede's Works, vol. II. B. iii. Rennell's Geographical Syſtem, p. iii.

[A] This obſcure viſion of Ezekiel is generally ſuppoſed to contain the deſcription of a temple, correſponding in its ſtructure and dimenſions with that of Solomon. The Prophet by preſenting to the captives this delineation of what had been "the deſire of their eyes," reminded them of the loſs which they had ſuffered from their unrighteouſneſs; and furniſhed them with a model upon which the temple might again riſe from its ruins; as it did, with leſs magnificence, indeed, in the time

ſays, that Ezekiel left two books concerning the captivity [B]; and the author of the Synopſis attributed to Athanaſius, ſuppoſes that one book has been loſt; but as the nine laſt chapters of Ezekiel conſtitute in ſome meaſure a diſtinct work, probably Joſephus might conſider them as forming a ſecond book.

It deſerves to be remarked, that we are informed by Joſephus, that the prophecy in which Ezekiel [C] foretold that "Zedekiah ſhould not ſee Babylon, though he ſhould die there," was judged by that monarch to be inconſiſtent with that of Jeremiah, who predicted that "Zedekiah ſhould behold the King of Babylon, and go to Babylon [D]." But both were exactly fulfilled; for Zedekiah did ſee the King of Babylon at Riblah, and then being deprived of his eyes, he was carried to Babylon, and died there [E]. From this account it appears, that Ezekiel's prophecies were tranſmitted to Jeruſalem, as we know that Jeremiah's were ſent to his countrymen in captivity [F]; an intercourſe being kept up, eſpecially for the conveyance of prophetic inſtructions: for ought that might conſole miſery, or

time of Zerubbabel. Under the particulars detailed by Ezekiel, however, we often diſcover the œconomy of a ſpiritual temple, which ſhould again be filled "with the glory of the Lord coming from the Eaſt." Vid. chap. xliii. 1—4. Revelation. Villalpandus, Capellus, and Commentators at large.

[B] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. c. vi.

[C] Ezek. xii. 13.

[D] Jerem. xxxiv. 3.

[E] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. cap. x. Vid. Lib. XI. c. x.

[F] Jerem. xxix. 1. and Hieron. in Ezech. xii. 7.

awaken

awaken repentance; and it was probably on the ground of this communication, that the Talmudiſts ſuppoſed that the prophecies of Ezekiel were arranged into their preſent form, and placed in the canon by the elders of the great ſynagogue [G].

The ſtile of this Prophet is characterized by Biſhop Lowth as bold, vehement, and tragical [H]; as often worked up to a kind of tremendous dignity. His book is highly parabolical, and abounds with figures and metaphorical expreſſions. Ezekiel may be compared to the Grecian Æſchylus; he diſplays a rough but majeſtic dignity; an unpoliſhed though noble ſimplicity; inferior, perhaps, in originality and elegance, to others of the Prophets; but unequalled in that force and grandeur for which he is particularly celebrated. He ſometimes emphatically and indignantly repeats his ſentiments; fully dilates his pictures; and deſcribes the adulterous manner of his countrymen under the ſtrongeſt and moſt exaggerated repreſentations that the licence of the eaſtern ſtile would admit. The middle part of the book is in ſome meaſure poetical; and contains even ſome

[G] Bava Bathra, c. i. and in Gemar. Iſidor. Orig. Lib. VI. cap. ii.

[H] The Ezekiel who is quoted by Clemens Alexandrinus and Euſebius as the tragic poet of the Jews, was a different perſon from the Prophet. Some ſuppoſe that he was one of the ſeventy tranſlators under Ptolemy. His work, in which he deſcribes the Exodus of the Jews under the conduct of Moſes, is ſtill extant. Vid. Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. I. p. 344. Euſeb. Præp. Evang. Lib. IX. c. 28. Fabric. Bib. Græc. Lib. II. c. xix.

perfect elegies [I]; though his thoughts are in general too irregular and uncontrolled to be chained down to rule, or fettered by language.

SOME perſons have conceived that Pythagoras imbibed his knowledge concerning the Moſaic Law from Ezekiel; and that the Prophet was the ſame perſon with Nazaratus [K], under whom Pythagoras is related to have ſtudied [L]. Pythagoras certainly did viſit Babylon, and according to many calculations he was contemporary with the Prophet.

[I] Chap. xxvii. and xxviii. 12—19.

[K] Called Zabratus, by Porphyry in Vita Pythagor. and Zaratus, by Plutarch. Vid. Huet. Prop. IV.

[L] Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. I. Some conceive, that Pythagoras might have been born about nine years after Ezekiel's departure for the captivity; and might have viſited Babylon very young, and ſo have converſed with Ezekiel when the Prophet was in years.

OF

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET

DANIEL.

THAT Daniel collected these prophecies into their present form is evident, since in various parts of the Book he speaks of himself in the character of its author [A]; and has been so considered in all ages of the church. Some Jewish writers, indeed, upon a mistaken notion that prophecies were never committed to writing out of the limits of Judæa, pretend that the book was composed by the men of the great synagogue, as also those of Esther, and Ezekiel [B]. It was, however, unquestionably admitted into the Hebrew canon as the authentic production of Daniel; and it is cited as his work in the New Testament [C].

[A] Dan. viii. 1, 2, 27. ix. 2. x. 2. xii. 5, &c.

[B] Bava Bathra, cap. in Gemara, and Rabbins. Josephus assures us, that Daniel himself committed his prophecies to writing. Vid. Joseph. Antiq. Lib. X. cap. xii.

[C] Matt. xxiv. 15. Mark xiii. 14.

In the time of Joſephus, Daniel was eſteemed as one of the greateſt of the Prophets [D]; but ſince the period in which the hiſtorian flouriſhed, the Jews, in order to invalidate the evidence that reſults from the Prophet's writings in ſupport of Chriſtianity, have, on the authority of a few doctors, agreed to claſs him among the Hagiographi [E]; which deciſion, however, does not, upon their own rules, affect his pretenſions to be conſidered as an inſpired writer. The reaſon which, among others, the Jews produce to authorize this degradation is, that Daniel lived in the Babyloniſh court, in a ſtile of magnificence inconſiſtent with the reſtrictions obſerved by the Prophets [F]; and though the divine will was revealed to him by an angel, yet as the Prophet himſelf called this revelation a dream, the Jewiſh writers, by ſome unintelligible diſtinction, conſider this as a mode of revelation inferior to any of thoſe ſpecified in God's addreſs to Moſes [G]. Without

[D] Joſeph. Lib. X. cap. xi. xii.

[E] Maimon. More Nevoch, Par. II. cap. iv. v. Hieron. Præf. in Dan. Theod. cap. ult. Dan. Yet Daniel is reckoned among the Prophets in ſome Talmudical books. Vid. Megilla, c. ii. Jacchiades in Dan. i. 17. In the ſecond century, Aquila and Theodotion placed him among the Prophets in their Greek tranſlations, agreeably to his rank in the Septuagint; and Melito found him reckoned in the ſame claſs. Vid. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. IV. c. xxvi. Epiphan. Hæres. 29. Nazar. note 7. De Pond. & Menſ. n. 4. 162. Chand. Vindic. ch. i. ſect. 3.

[F] Grot. Præf. ad Com. in Eſai. Huet. Demon. Evan. Prop. IV. cap. xiv. Kimchi. Præf. in Pſalm.

[G] Numb. xii. 6. Maimon. More Nevoch, Par. II. c. xlv.

ſtaying

ſtaying to refute theſe abſurd fancies, it is only neceſſary to obſerve, that the exact accompliſhment of Daniel's many remarkable predictions would have ſufficiently eſtabliſhed his right to the character of a Prophet, even if he had not been expreſsly diſtinguiſhed as ſuch by the ſacred writers [H]; and by Chriſt himſelf, who ſpoke agreeably to the opinion of the Jews, his contemporaries, in teſtimony to the prophetic character of Daniel [I].

DANIEL was a deſcendant of the Kings of Judah. He is related to have been born at upper Bethoron [K], which was in the territory of Ephraim. He was carried away captive to Babylon in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, A. M. 3398; probably in the eighteenth or twentieth year of his age [L]; and on account of his birth, wiſdom, and accompliſhments [M], was ſelected to ſtand in the preſence of Nebuchadnezzar; ſo that in him and his companions was fulfilled that prophecy in which Iſaiah declared to Hezekiah that "his iſſue ſhould be eunuchs in the palace of the King of Babylon [N]."

BY

[H] Heb. xi. 33, 34. 2 Pet. i. 21.

[I] Matt. xxiv. 15. Mark xiii. 14.

[K] Joſh. xvi. 5. Sixtus Senenſis affirms, after Epiphanius, that Daniel was born in Batheber near Jeruſalem. Vid. Bib. Sac. Lib. I. p. 40. Michaelis conſiders this as an improbable tradition. Vid. Michael. Præf. p. 8.

[L] Aben-Ezra.

[M] Dan. i. 3, 4. Ezek. xiv. 14. xxv. 3. xxviii. 3.

[N] 2 Kings xx. 18. Iſa. xxxix. 6, 7. The word eunuch formerly was a general title for the royal attendants. The

By the ſignal proofs which he gave of an excellent ſpirit, and by the many extraordinary qualities which he poſſeſſed, Daniel conciliated the favour of the Perſian monarchs; he was elevated to high rank [o], and entruſted with great power. In the viciſſitudes of his life, as in the virtues which he diſplayed, he has been thought to have reſembled Joſeph. Like him he lived amidſt the corruption of a great court; and preſerved an unſhaken attachment to his religion, in a ſituation embarraſſed with difficulties, and ſurrounded by temptations. He publickly profeſſed God's ſervice, in defiance of every danger; and predicted his fearful judgments to the very face of intemperate and powerful tyrants [p]. It may be collected from the penſive caſt of his

ſame phraſe in the original is applied to Potiphar. Vid. Gen. xxxix. 1. Vid. alſo Acts viii. 27.

[o] The name of Daniel implied, "the man of our deſires." Others ſay it ſignified, the judgment of God, or according to Michaelis, God is my judge. (Vid. Mich. Præf. in Dan. and Geirus in Dan.) The name given to him in the Babyloniſh court was Belteſhazzar, a name which, as Nebuchadnezzar remarked in his decree, was derived from the name of his God (Bel). Vid. Dan. iv. 8. It was uſual among the Babylonians ſo to denominate perſons after the names of their deities, as Nebuchadnezzar from Nebo, and Evil-Merodach from Merodach. Vid. Iſa. xlvi. 1. Jerem. l. 2. It was alſo cuſtomary among the eaſtern nations, for the Kings to diſtinguiſh their favourites by new names when they conferred on them new dignities; and the Mogul ſtill adheres to the cuſtom. Gen. xli. 45. Eſther ii. 7. Scaliger de Emend. Temp. Lib. V. and VI. Cellar. ad Curtium, Lib. VI. c. 6.

[p] Chap. iv. 20—28. v. 18—29.

writings,

writings, that he was of that melancholy diſpoſition which might be expected to characterize the ſervants of the true God amidſt ſcenes of idolatry. He experienced through his whole life very ſignal and miraculous proofs of divine favour; and was looked up to by the Perſians, as well as by his own countrymen, as an oracle of inſpired wiſdom [Q]; he contributed much to ſpread a knowledge of God among the Gentile nations. Many writers have ſuppoſed that Zoroaſter the celebrated founder or reformer of the Magian religion, was a diſciple of Daniel, ſince Zoroaſter was evidently well acquainted with many revealed truths, and borrowed from the ſacred writings many particulars for the improvement of his religious inſtitutes [R].

DANIEL appears to have attained a great age, as he propheſied during the whole period of the captivity. He probably, however, did not long ſurvive his laſt viſion concerning the ſucceſſion of the Kings of Perſia, which he beheld in the third year of Cyrus [S], A. M. 3470, when the Prophet muſt have reached his ninetieth year. As Daniel dates this viſion by a Perſian æra, it was apparently revealed to him in Perſia; and though ſome have aſſerted that he returned from the captivity with Ezra,

[Q] Dan. v. 11. Ezek. xiv. 14. xxviii. 3. Daniel was very young when Ezekiel bore this teſtimony to his praiſe.

[R] Wendelin. Diſſ. de Pythagor. Tetr.

[S] Chap. x. 1. xii. 13. Michael. in Jerem. Diſſ. Prelim. §. 21.

and took upon him the government of Syria [T], it is probable that he was too old to avail himſelf of the decree of Cyrus [U], however he might have been acceſſary in obtaining it; and that agreeably to the received opinion, he died in Perſia. Epiphanius and others affirm that he died at Babylon, and they ſay that his ſepulchre was there to be ſeen many ages after in the royal cave [X]. But it is more probable, according to the common tradition, that he was buried at Suſa, or Suſhan, where certainly he ſometimes reſided [Y], and perhaps as governor of Perſia; and where he was favoured with ſome of his laſt viſions. Benjamin Tudela, indeed, informs us [Z], that he was ſhewn the reputed tomb of

[T] Herbelot. Biblioth. Oriental, p. 283.

[U] The Daniel mentioned by Nehemiah, ch. x. 6. was a different perſon from the Prophet, being probably the ſame with Daniel, the ſon of Ithamar, ſpoken of by Ezra, ch. viii. 2. The Beleſis, likewiſe, mentioned by Diodorus, differed from the Prophet in his period and character.

[X] Epiphan. Sixt. Senens. Bib. Sac. Lib. I. p. 2. It appears, however, from other writers, that the ſepulchre of the Perſian Kings was near Perſepolis. Vid. Diodor. Sic. Reland. in Palæſt. Lib. III. p. 635. Strabo relates, that Cyrus was buried at Perſepolis, and that his monument was there ſeen by Alexander. Vid. Strab. Lib. XV. p. 730. His ſucceſſors were perhaps buried at Suſa.

[Y] Chap. viii. 2, 27. Shuſhan was the capital of Elam, or Perſia, properly ſo called. It was taken from Aſtyages, King of Media, by Nebuchadnezzar, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah. Vid. Jerem. xlix. 34. It afterwards revolted to Cyrus. Vid. Xenoph. Cyropæd. Lib. V.

[Z] Benjam. Itiner. p. 78. et Abulfar. Hiſt. Oriental. Dynaſt. 5.

Daniel

Daniel, at Tuſter (the ancient Suſa) on the Tigris; where likewiſe, as we are aſſured by Joſephus, was a magnificent edifice in the form of a tower, which was ſaid to have been built by Daniel [A], and which ſerved as a ſepulchre for the Perſian and Parthian Kings. This, in the time of the hiſtorian, retained its perfect beauty, and furniſhed a fine ſpecimen of the Prophet's ſkill in architecture.

The Book of Daniel contains a very intereſting mixture of hiſtory and prophecies; the former being introduced as far as was neceſſary to deſcribe the conduct of the Prophet, and to ſhew the deſign and occaſion of his predictions. The ſix firſt chapters are chiefly hiſtorical; though, indeed, the ſecond chapter contains the prophetic interpretation of Daniel's dream concerning the kingdoms which were ſucceſſively to illuſtrate the power of that God, who removeth and ſetteth up Kings, as ſeemeth good to him.

The four hiſtorical chapters which ſucceed, relate the miraculous deliverance of Daniel's companions from the furnace [B]; the remarkable puniſhment of Nebuchadnezzar's arrogance [C]; the impiety and portended

[A] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. cap. xii. The preſent copies of Joſephus, indeed, place this edifice in Ecbatana, but probably the hiſtorian originally wrote Suſa; for St. Jerom, who profeſſes to copy his account, reads Suſa, which was in the Babylonish empire. Vid. Hieron. Com. in Dan. viii. 2.

[B] In this miracle was literally accompliſhed a prophetic aſſurance of Iſaiah. Vid. xliii. 2.

[C] It has been uſually ſuppoſed, that the puniſhment inflicted on Nebuchadnezzar was that ſpecies of madneſs which

is

portended fate of Belſhazzar [D]; and the divine interpoſition for the protection of Daniel in the lion's

is called Lycanthropy. This diſorder operates ſo ſtrongly on thoſe affected by it, as to make them fancy themſelves wolves, and run howling and tearing every thing in extravagant imitation of thoſe animals. Vid. Sennerti Inſtitut. Medic. 2. Par. III. § 7. and § 2. c. iv. Aertius, Lib. VI. c. 2. Mercur. Val. Lect. VI. 20. Pauſan. in Arcad. Ovid. Metam. Lib. I. l. 232, et ſeq. But it ſhould ſeem from the account, that the divine threats were fulfilled in a more exact and literal ſenſe; and that Nebuchadnezzar was actually driven from ſociety, till his affections were brutalized, and his appearance changed. Scaliger conceives, that this Metamorphoſis is alluded to by Abydenus, who remarks, on the authority of the Chaldæan writers, that Nebuchadnezzar, after having uttered a prophecy relative to the deſtruction of the Babyloniſh empire by Cyrus, *diſappeared*. Vid. Euſeb. Præp. Evan. Lib. IX. c. xli. Scaliger's notes upon the ancient fragments in the appendix to his work, de Emendatione Temporum.

[D] The death of Belſhazzar is related by Xenophon nearly in the ſame manner as it is deſcribed by Daniel. Vid. Hiſtor. Lib. VII. and many other particulars recorded in this book are repreſented in a ſimilar way by heathen hiſtorians, as St. Jerom has ſhewn by many references. The eaſtern Kings had, however, many titles aſſumed on various occaſions; they are therefore ſometimes ſpoken of in this book, as in other parts of ſcripture, under titles different from thoſe by which they are diſtinguiſhed in prophane hiſtory; and probably the ſacred writers choſe to characterize wicked princes by thoſe obnoxious appellations which they aſſumed in honour of their idols; as in the inſtance of Evil-Merodach and Belſhazzar. Belſhazzar was probably the ſon of Evil-Merodach, by Nitocris, and the grandſon of Nebuchadnezzar, whoſe ſon (or deſcendant) he is called in ſcripture. Vid. Biſhop Halliſax's ſecond ſermon on Prophecy.

den [E]. All theſe accounts are written with a ſpirit and animation highly intereſting; we ſeem to be preſent at the ſcenes deſcribed; and the whole work is enriched with the moſt exalted ſentiments of piety; and with the fineſt atteſtations to the praiſe and glory of God.

DANIEL flouriſhed during the ſucceſſive reigns of ſeveral Babyloniſh and Median Kings, to the conqueſt of Babylon by Cyrus; in the beginning of whoſe reign he probably died. The events recorded in the ſixth chapter were coeval with Darius the Mede; but in the ſeventh and eighth chapters Daniel returns to an earlier period, to relate the viſions which he beheld in the three firſt years of Belſhazzar's reign [F]; and thoſe which follow in the four laſt chapters were revealed to him in the reign of Darius.

THE ſix laſt chapters of this book are compoſed of prophecies delivered at different times, all of which are, however, in ſome degree connected as parts of one great ſcheme. They extend through many ages; and furniſh the moſt ſtriking deſcription of the fall of ſucceſſive kingdoms, which were to be introductory to the eſtabliſhment of the Meſſiah's reign. They characterize in deſcriptive terms the four great monarchies of the world to be ſucceeded by "that

[E] Daniel's deliverance from the den of lions, as well as that of his friends from the flames, was long celebrated among the Jews. Vid. 1 Macc. ii. 59, 60. and 3 Macc. vi. 3, 4, 5.

[F] Michael. Præf. in ch. vii. Hieron. Com. in ch. vii.

kingdom

kingdom which ſhould not be deſtroyed [G]." They foreſhew the power and deſtruction of Anti-chriſt, in predictions repeated and extended by St. John [H]; and conclude with a diſtinct aſſurance of a general reſurrection to a life of everlaſting ſhame, or everlaſting glory [I].

THE prophecies of Daniel were in many inſtances ſo exactly accompliſhed, that thoſe perſons who would have otherwiſe been unable to reſiſt the evidence which they furniſhed in ſupport of our religion, have not ſcrupled to affirm, that they muſt have been written ſubſequently to thoſe occurrences which they ſo faithfully deſcribe [K]. But this groundleſs and unſupported aſſertion of Porphyry, who in the third century wrote againſt chriſtianity, ſerves but to eſtabliſh the character of Daniel as a great and enlightened Prophet; and Porphyry, by confeſſing and proving from the beſt hiſtorians, that all which is in-

[G] Dan. vii. 13, 14, 27.

[H] Dan. paſſim, and Biſhop Andrews's Reſpon. ad Bellarm. Apol. p. 334. & Revel. The prophecies concerning the Anti-chriſt are uſually applied to the Papal power prefigured by Antiochus Epiphanes. Vid. chap. viii. 23—25. xi. 36—45.

[I] Dan. xii. 2, 31.

[K] The firſt chapter has by ſome been thought to have been written after the time of Daniel, becauſe it ſpeaks of the Prophet in the third perſon, and ſays that he continued to the firſt year of Cyrus, (that is, to his firſt year over the Medes and Perſians, and to the third over Babylon); but theſe words might well proceed from Daniel, as he lived beyond that period. The concluſive verſe of the ſixth chapter might equally have proceeded from Daniel, ſpeaking of himſelf in the third perſon.

cluded

cluded in the eleventh chapter of Daniel relative to the Kings of the north, and of the ſouth, of Syria, and of Egypt, was truly and in every particular, acted and done in the order there related: has undeſignedly contributed to the reputation of thoſe prophecies of which he attempted to deſtroy the authority; for it is contrary to all hiſtorical teſtimony, and contrary to all probability, to ſuppoſe that the Jews would have admitted into the canon of their ſacred writ, a book which contained pretended prophecies of what had already happened [L]. And indeed it is impoſſible that theſe prophecies ſhould have been written after the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, ſince they were probably tranſlated into Greek near an hundred years before the period in which he lived; and that tranſlation was in the poſſeſſion of the Egyptians, who entertained no kindneſs for the Jews, or their religion [M]. Thoſe prophecies alſo, which

[L] The names of the muſical inſtruments mentioned in this book, have ſome reſemblance to thoſe of Grecian inſtruments; but as colonies of Ionians, Dorians, and Æolians, were ſettled in Aſia, long before the time of Daniel, technical names might eaſily be communicated from them to the Babylonians; or rather, as the Eaſt was the ſource of muſick, and the words appear to be of eaſtern derivation, they might be originally derived from the Eaſt to the Greeks. Vid. Marſham. Chron. Sæc. 13. and Chandler's Vindic. of Def. chap. i. ſect. 2.

[M] St. Jerom informs us, that the Septuagint verſion of Daniel was rejected by the church, for that of Theodotion. Vid. Hieron. on Dan. iv. 8. The Septuagint was admitted into Origen's Hexapla, and from his time fell into diſcredit. Before it was in general uſe, the Latin verſion was probably made

which foretold the victories and dominion of Alexander [N], were ſhewn to that conqueror himſelf by Jaddua, the high-prieſt, as we learn from Joſephus [O], and the Jews thereupon obtained an exemption from tribute every ſabbatical year, and the free exerciſe of their laws. Many other prophecies in the book have likewiſe been fulfilled ſince the time of Porphyry [P].

DANIEL not only predicted future events with ſingular preciſion, but likewiſe accurately defined the time in which they ſhould be fulfilled, as was remarkably exemplified in that illuſtrious prophecy of the ſeventy weeks [Q], in which he prefixed the period

made from it, and it was cited by the earlieſt writers. It was therefore probably made with the reſt of the prophetical books, which we know were all tranſlated before the time of Euergetes II. Vid. Prol. in Eccluſ. Euſeb. Dem. Evan. Lib. VIII. p. 381. Clemens. Roman. Epiſt. I. § 34. Juſtin Martyr, Dialog. cum Trypho, edit. Oxon, p. 87, 241. Chand. Vind. ch. i. ſect. 3.

[N] Chap. viii. 5. xi. 3. Lloyd's Letter to Sherlock. Chandler's Vindic. chap. ii. ſect. 1. Bayle's Dict. Art. Macedo. note o.

[O] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. cap. xii. Lib. XI. cap. viii. Newton's Diſſ. vol. ii. Diſſ. xv. p. 36.

[P] Porphyry was born at Tyre, A. D. 233. Some of his objections apply to the ſpurious parts of Daniel. St. Jerom agrees with him in applying the eleventh chapter as far as the twenty-firſt verſe to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. The Prophet afterwards ſpeaks of the Romans and of the Antichriſt, as he does of the latter in the eighth and twelfth chapters. Vid. Biſhop Chandler's Vindic. of Def. and S. Chandler's Vindication of the Antiquity and Authority of Daniel's Prophecies.

[Q] Chap. ix. 24—27. For computations concerning the exact accompliſhment of this amazing prophecy, vid. Uſſer. Annal.

period for "bringing in everlaſting righteouſneſs by the Meſſiah," as well as in ſome other myſterious predictions which probably mark out the time or duration of the power of Antichriſt [R], and as ſome ſuppoſe, for the commencement of the millenium, or univerſal reign of ſaints, which they conceive to be foretold; for the explanation of which we muſt wait the event.

FROM the fourth verſe of the ſecond chapter, to the end of the ſeventh chapter of this book, Daniel wrote his hiſtory originally in the Chaldaic, or Syriac language [S]; and, indeed, the greateſt part of the book bears marks of the Chaldaic idiom; as might well be expected from an author who had ſo long reſided in Chaldæa. As all the hiſtorical particulars which concerned the Babyloniſh nation were probably recorded in the annals of that government [T]; Daniel might poſſibly have extracted ſome paſſages, as, perhaps, the decree of Nebuchadnezzar [U], from thoſe chronicles; and no

Annal. V. T. ad Ann. Per. Jul. 4260. Prid. Connect. Ann. A. C. 458. Lloyd's Chron. Tables, Num. 3, 4. Baſnage's Diſſ. on Seventy Weeks. Calmet Diſſert. ſur les Sept. Sem. Petav. de Doct. Temp. Lib. XII. &c.

[R] Chap. vii. 25. viii. 14. xii. 7. Lowth, &c.

[S] Theſe were originally the ſame language. Vid. 2 Kings xviii. 26. Ezra iv. 7. The language of Babylon was the pure Chaldee; the modern Syriac is the language which was uſed by the Chriſtians of Comagena and other provinces bordering upon Syria, when that was the language of the country.

[T] Eſther ii. 23. vi. 1.

[U] Chap. iv.

teſtimony

teſtimony could be more honourable, or with more propriety prefixed to his prophecies. As the Jews alſo in their diſperſion had ſeparately intermixed with the natives of Chaldæa, they all underſtood the language of the country; and muſt have received ſo authentic a document of Daniel's fidelity with particular reſpect. The remaining chapters [x] which were written in Hebrew, contain prophetic viſions, which were revealed only to the Prophet, and related principally to the church and people of God.

The ſtile of Daniel is clear, conciſe, ſimple, and hiſtorical, though the viſions which he deſcribes were in themſelves of a figurative and emblematical character. They pourtrayed future circumſtances to his imagination under repreſentations ſtrikingly ſymbolical of thoſe particulars which they foreſhewed; and they who advert to the enſigns and armorial devices of thoſe nations of whom Daniel propheſies, will diſcover a very appoſite propriety in the hieroglyphical images which the Prophet ſelects [y].

Daniel's name, like that of many others of the

[x] The firſt chapter of the book, and the three firſt verſes of the ſecond chapter, were written in Hebrew, as they form a kind of introduction to the book.

[y] Chap. viii. Thus the ram was the royal enſign of the Perſians, and was to be ſeen on the pillars of Perſepolis. Vid. Ammian. Marcel. Lib. XIX. Sir J. Chardin's Travels. The goat alſo was the emblem or arms of Macedon. Vid. Juſtin. Hiſt. Lib. VIII. Mede's Works, B. III. p. 654, 712. Joſeph. Archæol. Lib. X. cap. x. and Newton on Dan. ch. iv. Par. I.

ſacred

ſacred writers, has been borrowed to countenance ſpurious books, beſides the apocryphal additions in our Bibles. A book intitled the Viſions of Daniel [z], was condemned as ſpurious and impious by the decree of Gratian [a]. In this book Daniel is ſaid to have foretold how many years each Emperor ſhould live, as well as the events of his reign, and the future circumſtances of the Saracens. Some ſuppoſititious magical writings were likewiſe attributed to the Prophet [b]. But Daniel, though well verſed in the Chaldæan philoſophy, as Moſes was "learned in all the wiſdom of Egypt," yet diſclaimed all magical arts, and relied on the true God.

[z] Ὁράσεις Somnialia.

[a] Decret. Part II. Cauſſ. 27. Quæſt. 1. c. xvi. and Athan. Synop. Lib. II.

[b] Joſ. Alb. Fabrici. Codic. Pſeudepig. V. Teſt. p. 1130.

GENERAL PREFACE

TO THE

TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS.

THE writings of the twelve Minor Prophets were in the Hebrew canon comprized in one book, which was called by St. Stephen, the Book of the Prophets [A]. By whom they were ſo compiled is uncertain; probably, however, they were collected together in that form by Ezra, or by ſome member of the Great Synagogue [B]; but certainly above 200 years before the birth of Chriſt; for the author of the Book of Eccleſiaſticus, who wrote about A. M. 3770, celebrates the memorial of the Twelve Prophets under one general encomium: as of thoſe who had comforted God's people, and confirmed their confidence in God's promiſes of a Redeemer [C]. The order in which the books are placed, is not the ſame

[A] Acts vii. 42. comp. with Amos v. 25.

[B] Abarb. Præf. in Iſaiah. Bava Bathra, &c.

[C] Eccluſ xlix. 10. and Arnald on the Place. Chandler's Defen. ch. i. ſect. 2. p. 44. It is called the book of the twelve Prophets, by Cyprian. Epiſt. 59.

in the Septuagint as in the Hebrew [D]. According to the latter, they ſtand as in our tranſlation; but in the Greek the ſeries is altered as to the ſix firſt, to the following arrangement: Hoſea, Amos, Micah, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah. This change, however, is of no conſequence, ſince neither in the original, nor in the Septuagint, are they placed with exact regard to the time in which their ſacred authors reſpectively flouriſhed.

THE order in which they ſhould ſtand, if chronologically arranged, is by Blair and others, ſuppoſed to be as follows: Jonah, Amos, Hoſea, Micah, Nahum, Joel, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Obadiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi. And this order will be found to be generally conſiſtent with the periods to which the Prophets will be reſpectively aſſigned in the following work; except in the inſtance of Joel, who probably flouriſhed rather earlier than he is placed by theſe chronologers. The preciſe period of this Prophet, however, cannot be aſcertained, and ſome diſputes might be maintained concerning the priority of others alſo when they were nearly contemporaries, as Amos and Hoſea; and when the firſt prophecies of a later Prophet were delivered at the ſame time with, or previouſly to ſome of thoſe of a Prophet who was called earlier to the ſacred office. The following ſcheme, however, in which alſo the greater Prophets will be introduced, may enable the reader more accurately to comprehend the actual and relative periods in which they ſeverally propheſied.

[D] Hieron. Præf. in Lib. Reg. in 12 Proph. & in Joel.

The PROPHETS in their ſuppoſed Order of Time, arranged according to Blair's Tables [E], with but little Variation.

	Before Chriſt.	Kings of Judah.	Kings of Iſrael.
Jonah,	Between 856 and 784.		Jehu, and Jehoahaz, according to Lloyd; but Joath and Jeroboam the Second, according to Blair.
Amos,	Between 810 and 785.	Uzziah, ch. i. 1.	Jeroboam the Second, ch. i. 1.
Hoſea,	Between 810 and 725.	Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, the third year of Hezekiah.	Jeroboam the Second, chap. i. 1.
Iſaiah,	Between 810 and 698.	Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, chap. i. 1. and perhaps Manaſſeth.	
Joel,	Between 810 and 660, or later.	Uzziah, or poſſibly Manaſſeth.	
Micah,	Between 758 and 699.	Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, ch. i. 1.	Pekah and Hoſea.
Nahum,	Between 720 and 698.	Probably towards the cloſe of Hezekiah's reign.	
Zephaniah,	Between 640 and 609.	In the reign of Joſiah, ch. i. 1.	
Jeremiah,	Between 628 and 586.	In the thirteenth year of Joſiah.	
Habakkuk,	Between 612 and 598.	Probably in the reign of Jehoiakim.	
Daniel,	Between 606 and 534.	During all the Captivity.	
Obadiah,	Between 588 and 583.	Between the taking of Jeruſalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the deſtruction of the Edomites by him.	
Ezekiel,	Between 595 and 536.	During part of the Captivity.	
Haggai,	About 520 to 516.	After the return from Babylon.	
Zechariah,	From 520 to 518, or longer.		
Malachi,	Between 436 and 397.		

[E] Biſhop Newcome's verſion of Minor Prophets, Preface, p. 43.

THE Twelve Minor Prophets were ſo called, not in reſpect to any ſuppoſed inferiority in their writings as to matter or ſtile, but in reference to the brevity of their works. The ſhortneſs, indeed, of theſe prophecies ſeems to have been one reaſon for joining them together [F]; by which means the volume of their contents was ſwelled to a greatneſs in ſome degree correſpondent to their importance [G]. Neither were they later in point of time than the greater Prophets; ſome having preceded Iſaiah; and many of them having lived before Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; and by the Greeks, indeed, they are placed before them. It is a traditionary account, that of theſe Prophets, ſuch as do not furniſh us with the date of their prophecies muſt be ſuppoſed to have flouriſhed as contemporaries with, or immediately after the Prophets, that precede them in the order of the books; but this is not invariably true; and is built upon an erroneous ſuppoſition, that the books are chronologically arranged in the Hebrew manuſcripts.

SOME of the Prophets were probably born in the territory of Iſrael, but moſt in that of Judah. They appear, however, to have been ſometimes commiſ-

[F] Beth Iſrael relates, that Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, added their writings to thoſe of the Minor Prophets, and compoſed them into one volume, leſt they ſhould periſh. Vid. Bava Bathra, c. i.

[G] Hieron. Proleg. 12 Prophet. Theodor. in Proœm. Aug. de Civit. Lib. XVIII. c. xxvii.

ſioned to preach reciprocally againſt thoſe tribes among whom they were not born.

These twelve Prophets furniſh us in ſcattered parts with a lively ſketch of many particulars relative to the hiſtory of Judah and of Iſrael; as well as of other kingdoms; they deſcribe in prophetic anticipation, but with hiſtorical exactneſs, the fate of Babylon, of Nineveh, of Tyre, of Sidon, and of Damaſcus. The three laſt Prophets eſpecially, illuſtrate many circumſtances at a period when the hiſtorical pages of ſcripture are cloſed, and when prophane authors are entirely wanting. They deſcribe under the moſt ſtriking repreſentations, the advent and character of the Meſſiah and his kingdom, and endeavour by the moſt admirable inſtruction to excite thoſe religious ſentiments which would facilitate the reception of the Goſpel. The Jewiſh Prophets of the moſt eminent rank at firſt flouriſhed but as ſingle lights, and followed each other in individual ſucceſſion; for during the continuance of the theocracy, and perhaps ſome time after, the Jews were in poſſeſſion of the power of conſulting God by means of the Urim and Thummim. But when the calamities of the captivity approached; during the continuance of that affliction, and amidſt the melancholy ſcenes which the people contemplated on their return to deſolate cities and to a waſted land; during theſe dark periods, the Prophets were, by God's mercies, raiſed up in greater numbers for the conſolation of his people; who were encouraged to look forward to that joyful deliverance by the Meſſiah which now approached.

approached. The light of inſpiration was collected into one blaze previous to its ſuſpenſion; and it ſerved to keep alive the expectations of the Jews during the awful interval which prevailed between the expiration of prophecy and its grand completion in the advent of Chriſt. If in the writings of the later Minor Prophets, we ſometimes are perplexed at ſeeing the light of revelation but faintly glimmering through the obſcurity of their ſtile; we muſt recollect that they lived when the language of the Jews began to vitiate and decline; that there are no contemporary records to illuſtrate their prophecies; that the brevity of their works prevents us from collating the author with himſelf; and that we who read them in Engliſh, judge of them through the imperfect medium of a tranſlation [H].

[H] "Hebræi bibunt Fontes, Græci Rivos, Latini Paludes," as Picus Mirandula obſerved.

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET HOSEA.

HOSEA has been ſuppoſed to have been the moſt ancient of the Twelve Minor Prophets; and, indeed, by ſome writers he is repreſented as having preceded all the prophets [A]. ſince he flouriſhed about the middle of the reign of Jeroboam the Second, the ſon of Joaſh, King of Iſrael, and towards the commencement of that of Uzziah [B], who

[A] Hieron. in Oſee. Baſil in Iſai. i. Ruſin, &c. In the ſecond verſe of the firſt chapter it is ſaid, "the beginning of the word of the Lord by Hoſea," which ſome have ſuppoſed to imply, that when God began to manifeſt himſelf, he addreſſed Hoſea; but it perhaps means only, that the firſt revelation to (a) Hoſea was as follows.

[B] Chap. i. 1. Uzziah, or, as he is ſometimes called, Azariah, and Ozias, aſcended the throne of Judah in the twenty-ſeventh year of Jeroboam the Second, that is, according to ſome chronologiſts, in the twenty-ſeventh year of his reign, from the æra of his conjunction with his father; and in

who began to reign over Jeruſalem about A. M. 3194. According to ſome accounts of no great authority [C], he was of the tribe of Iſſachar, and of the city of Beleenor [D]; others repreſent him to have been of the tribe of Judah. He was the ſon of Beeri [E], and entered on the prophetic office ſome time between the years of 3194 and 3219. He continued to prophely above ſixty years: during the ſucceſſive reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah; and probably to about the third year of the reign of the laſt; or if we reckon by the Kings of Iſrael, againſt which nation he chiefly propheſied, he may be deſcribed as having flouriſhed during the reign of Jeroboam and his ſucceſſors, to the ſixth year of Hoſea, which correſponds with the third year of Hezekiah. Hoſea was therefore nearly contemporary with Iſaiah, Amos, and Jonah. It

in the ſixteenth year of his monarchy, which commenced A. M. 3179. As Jeroboam reigned forty-one years, Hoſea muſt have entered on his miniſtry before the twenty-fifth year of Uzziah's reign, if he propheſied while Uzziah and Jeroboam were contemporaries. Vid. Comm. on 2 Kings xv. 1.

[C] Pſeudo Epiphan. & Doroth. de Vit. Prophet.

[D] Or Bethſome, not Beleemoth. Vid. Druſ. in Oſee, ch. i. 1.

[E] Not Beerah, who was taken captive by Tiglath-Pileſer. Vid. 1 Chron. v. 6. whoſe name is, indeed, ſpelt differently, and who was a Prince of the Reubenites. The word Beeri implies a well; or as ſome ſay, it is derived from a word which imports teaching: whence an argument in ſupport of the Rabbinical fancy, that Hoſea was the ſon of a Doctor, or Prophet. Hoſea's name ſignifies a Saviour.

is

is probable that he reſided chiefly in Samaria; and that he was the firſt Prophet, of thoſe at leaſt whoſe prophecies we poſſeſs, that predicted the deſtruction of that country; which was effected ſoon after the Prophet's death by Salmaneſer, King of Aſſyria [F].

HOSEA undoubtedly compiled his own prophecies, and he ſpeaks of himſelf in the firſt perſon in this book [G]. Calmet, indeed, on account of ſome ſuppoſed chronological difficulties, queſtions the authenticity of the firſt verſe, which he conceives to have been a ſubſequent addition; but theſe difficulties may be ſolved without having recourſe to ſuch conjectures. The book is cited by St. Matthew as unqueſtionably the inſpired production of a Prophet [H], as likewiſe by St. Paul [I], and, indeed, by Chriſt himſelf [K].

THE prophecies of Hoſea being ſcattered through the book without date or connection, cannot now be chronologically arranged with any certainty. They are, however, perhaps placed in the order in which they were at firſt uttered; and Wells, upon ſome probable conjectures, ſuppoſes them to have been delivered in the following ſucceſſion, reckoning by the Kings of Iſrael.

[F] 2 Kings xviii. 10. Hieron. in Oſee, cap. i. & Uſſer ad A. M. 3197.

[G] Chap. iii. 1, 2, 3.

[H] Matt. ii. 15. from Hoſea xi. 1. and Chand. Def. ch. xi. ſect. 1.

[I] Rom. ix. 25, 26. 1 Cor. xv. 35.

[K] Matt. ix. 12, 13. xii. 7.

IN

In the reign of Jeroboam,	The three firſt chapters.
In the Interregnum which ſucceeded the death of Jeroboam,	The fourth chapter.
In the reign of Menahem, or in that of his ſon Pekahiah. According to which account none are aſſigned to the ſhort intermediate reigns of Zechariah and Shallum,	The fifth chapter, to chap. vi. 3. incluſively.
In the reign of Pekah,	From chap. vi. 4. to chap. vii. 10. incluſively.
In the reign of Hoſea,	From chap. vii. 11. to the end. Comp. chap. vii. 11. with 2 Kings xvii. 4. Wells ſubdivides this portion into two parts, ſuppoſing the firſt which terminates with the tenth chapter, to have been delivered before the King of Aſſyria took away the golden calf that was at Bethel; and the remainder after that event.

At whatever periods the prophecies were delivered, the occaſion and deſign of them are ſufficiently clear.

clear. The author, in one continued ſtrain of invective, declaims againſt the ſins of Iſrael; expoſes in the ſtrongeſt terms the ſpiritual whoredoms of thoſe who worſhipped the vain idols erected at Bethel and Bethaven, calling on Judah to ſhun pollutions ſo offenſive to Jehovah. He denounces God's vengeance againſt Ephraim, (the repreſentative of the ten tribes,) who ſhould vainly call on other nations for protection. He points out the folly of the people in their purſuits: telling them, that they had "ſown the wind, and ſhould reap the whirlwind." He threatens them in many prophecies, from among which we may ſelect, as remarkable proofs of that foreknowledge with which the Prophet was inſpired, thoſe in which he foretold the captivities, diſperſion, and ſufferings of Iſrael [L]; the deliverance of Judah, from Sennacherib, alluſively figurative of ſalvation by Chriſt [M]; the puniſhment of Judah, and the demolition of its cities [N]; the congregation of the Gentile converts [O]; the preſent ſtate of the Jews [P], and their future reſtoration in the general eſtabliſhment of the Meſſiah's kingdom [Q]; the calling of our Saviour out of Egypt [R]; his reſurrection on the third

[L] Chap. i. 4, 5. v. 5—7. ix. 3, 6—17. x. 5, 6, 15. xiii. 16.

[M] Chap. i. 7. comp. with 2 Kings xix. 35. and Chand. Def. ch. ii. ſect. 1. p. 70.

[N] Chap. v. 10. viii. 14.

[O] Chap. i. 10, 11. ii. 23. comp. with Rom. ix. 24, 26.

[P] Chap. iii. 4. Vid. Origen. Philocal. c. i. Hieron. in loc.

[Q] Chap. i. 11. iii. 5. xiv. 4, 8.

[R] Chap. xi. 1. comp. with Matt. ii. 15. and Hieron. Grot. & in loc.

day;

day [s]; and the terrors of the laſt judgment, figuratively to be repreſented in temporal deſtruction impending over Samaria [t]. Thus, amidſt the denunciations of wrath, the people were animated by ſome dawnings of favour; and taught to cultivate righteouſneſs and mercy in expectation of the bleſſings of the Lord [u]; and in the aſſurances of a final ranſom from the power of the grave, and of a redemption from death to be vanquiſhed and deſtroyed [x].

The ſtile of Hoſea has been conſidered as particularly obſcure; it is ſententious and abrupt, and characterized by a compreſſive and antiquated caſt. The tranſitions of perſon are ſudden; the connexive and adverſative particles frequently omitted. His figures and ſimilitudes are rather lively than elegant, and are traced with more force than exactneſs [y]. His writings are animated with a fine ſpirit of indignation, deſcriptive of the zealous reſentment which he felt againſt the princes and prieſts who countenanced the iniquities of the people; and his work may be conſidered as a noble exordium againſt thoſe general

[s] Chap. vi. 2. comp. with 1 Cor. xv. 4. Auguſt. de Trinit. cap. xxviii. Cyprian. cont. Jud. Lib. II. cap. xxiv. Bernard. Serm. 1. in Reſur. Orig. Homil. 5. in Exod. Tertul. Adverſ. Jud. c. xiii. and Commentators.

[t] Chap. x. 8. comp. with Luke xxiii. 30. and Rev. vi. 16. Hieron. in loc. and Lowth on Iſaiah ii. 19.

[u] Chap. x. 12. Hieron. in loc.

[x] Chap. xiii. 14. comp. with 1 Cor. xv. 55. and Pocock, in loc.

[y] Lowth's Prælect. 21.

offences

offences which the Prophets who ſucceeded him more particularly detailed; as well as a diffuſe revelation of thoſe judgments which were afterwards more minutely deſcribed.

The ſubject of Hoſea's marriage has been much agitated. Many Jewiſh and Chriſtian writers conceive it to have been enjoined, and performed in a literal and hiſtorical ſenſe [z]; ſome ſuppoſing that "a wife of whoredoms" may imply a wife who ſhould prove falſe [A]; or only a wife from among the Iſraelites, who were remarkable for their idolatrous fornications; as likewiſe by an adultereſs [B], whom the Prophet is repreſented afterwards to have bought, may be underſtood, a woman who had apoſtatized from God in a ſpiritual ſenſe. Thoſe who contend for the hiſtorical truth of theſe relations, maintain that all impropriety in ſuch proceedings was done away by God's command; and that the immediate miniſter of God might, conſiſtently with the deſign of his appointment, be employed thus to illuſtrate the ſcandalous conduct of the Iſraelites. Other writers however contend, that theſe

[z] Hieron. & Theodoret in loc. Auguſt. Grotius, Calmet's Preface. Carpzov. Introd. ad Lib. Bib. Pars III. p. 277. Abarbin. & Baſil in loc. cap. viii. p. 933. Grot. & Wells in loc.

[A] Wells, Diodat. &c.

[B] It is uncertain, whether by the woman ſpoken of in the third chapter, is meant Hoſea's wife, whom he is commanded to take back after her infidelity, as predicted; or a different perſon appointed for the Prophet after the death of the firſt wife. Conſult Pocock, and other Commentators.

accounts

accounts are deſcriptive of tranſactions in viſion, as the expreſſion of "the word of the Lord," that came to the Prophet, might ſeem to intimate [C]; and others conſider the relations as fictitious repreſentations furniſhed by way of parable [D]. Without preſuming to determine on either ſide on a ſubject ſo difficult, it may be obſerved, that it was not inconſiſtent with the character of a viſion, or of a parabolical fiction, to ſpecify minute particulars with narrative exactneſs [E]. The names, therefore, of the perſonages introduced [F] in the accounts, can furniſh no explanation of the nature of the tranſactions; and whether real or fictitious, they might with equal conſiſtency be repreſented as figurative.

[C] Aben-Ezra, R. David Kimchi, Maimon. More Nevoch, L. II. c. xlvi. Hieron. Præf. in Com. and General Preface, p. 333, note u.

[D] Hieron. in loc. Aben-Ezra, Iſidor, &c. The Chaldee Paraphraſt has been thought to have conſidered it as a parable. He introduces the account thus: "The Lord ſaid unto Hoſea, Go, and utter a prophecy," &c. Vid. R. Tanch. Rivet, Junius Tremellius, Pocock, &c.

[E] Ezek. xxiii. Luke xvi. 20—31.

[F] By "children of whoredoms," we are probably to underſtand legitimate children of a woman addicted to fornication; perverſe, lewd, or idolatrous children, who ſhould imitate the conduct of their mother.

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET JOEL.

THE Book of Joel is placed in the Hebrew Bible immediately after that of Hoſea; but in the Septuagint verſion the books of Amos and Micah are interpoſed between them. It is difficult to determine whether the Greek tranſlators were authorized by chronology to change the order, ſince there is no poſitive criterion by which the age of Joel can be aſcertained. St. Jerom, however, and many of the ancients [A], were of opinion, that as no date is prefixed to the book, its author ſhould be ſuppoſed, agreeably to the Jewiſh rule, to have flouriſhed at the ſame time with Hoſea, whoſe writings in the Hebrew manuſcripts immediately precede. This rule is, however, not to be depended on; neither can any proof of the priority of Joel be drawn from

[A] Hieron. Præf. in Proph. Theodor. in Præloq. Proph. Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. I. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxvii.

the

the notion ſupported by Uſher [B]: who conceived that the famine and drought of which Joel ſpeaks as impending in his time, were parts of the ſame affliction which Amos repreſented as actually come to paſs [C]; for Joel propheſied calamities againſt Judah; and Amos deſcribes afflictions which were ſeemingly ſuſtained, as a peculiar judgment only by the people of Iſrael. Still, however, there is no ſufficient reaſon for departing from the Hebrew order [D]; nor is it neceſſary to ſuppoſe that Joel propheſied after the captivity of the ten tribes, merely becauſe he makes no mention of Iſrael. His commiſſion probably was confined to Judah, as that of Hoſea, his ſuppoſed contemporary, was chiefly reſtricted to Samaria; and had the divine threats been already accompliſhed againſt Iſrael, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that the Prophet would, like his ſucceſſors, have inſtructed the people to take warning by the fate of a ſiſter kingdom [E]. We may therefore ſafely ſuppoſe him to have lived in the reigns of Uzziah, King of Judah, and of Jeroboam, King of Iſrael [F], who flouriſhed

[B] Uſſer ad A. M. 3197. Lloyd's Tables.

[C] Amos iv. 7, 8.

[D] Abarb. Præf. in 12 Proph.

[E] Iſrael mentioned in ch. iii. 2. means not merely the ten tribes, but the whole nation of the Jews; and the Prophet ſpeaks prophetically of a future diſperſion among the nations from which God's people ſhould be gathered.

[F] Lloyd's Tables. A French writer, (P. Pezron, ſur les Prophetes,) fixes the prophecy of Joel to the twentieth year of Uzziah, and the thirty-ſixth of Jeroboam the Second. Vid.

flouriſhed as contemporary ſovereigns between A.M. 3194 and 3219; and to have delivered his prophecies ſoon after Hoſea had commenced his miniſtry; though ſome Jewiſh and Chriſtian writers have choſen to aſſign to him a later period [G]; ſome placing him in the reign of Jotham [H]; others in that of Joram [I]; and others contending that he propheſied under Manaſſeth [K]; or Joſiah [L], the laſt of which monarchs began to reign about 640 years before the birth of Chriſt.

JOEL was the ſon of Pethuel, or Bethuel, and according to ſome reports, of the tribe of Reuben [M].

alſo, Joel ii. 20. which contains a prediction, that ſeems, at leaſt, in its ſecondary ſenſe, to relate to the deſtruction of Sennacherib's army, which happened in the reign of Hezekiah, A. M. 3294.

[G] Poli Synopſis.

[H] Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxvii.

[I] The advocates for this period maintain, that Joel foreſhewed the impending famine which deſolated Judæa, ſeven years in the reign of Joram. Vid. 2 Kings viii. 1—3.

[K] Seder Olam Rabba, & Zuta, Kimchi, R. Salomo, R. David Ganz, Druſius, and Wells's Preface to Joel. Wells maintains, that the famine or dearth of which Micah propheſied, was to take place (and did happen) in the time of Manaſſeth. Vid. Wells's Preface to Micah, and in Micah vi. 14. note a. a.

[L] Calmet's Preface ſur Joel. He conceives Joel to have been contemporary with Joſiah, to whoſe reign he aſſigns the drought ſpoken of by Jeremiah, ch. xii. 4. xiv. But the laſt of theſe chapters, whether prophetic or deſcriptive, was compoſed probably in the reign of Jehoiakim, the ſucceſſor of Joſiah.

[M] Epiphan. de Vit. Prophet.

HE

He is related to have been born at Bethoron [N]; which was probably the lower or nether Bethoron, a town in the territory of Benjamin [O], between Jeruſalem and Cæſarea. Of the particulars of his life, or of the age to which he attained, we have no account [P]. Dorotheus relates only, that he died in peace at the place of his nativity.

THE book appears to be entirely prophetic, though Joel, under the impreſſion of foreſeen calamities, deſcribes their effects as preſent; and by an animated repreſentation, anticipates the ſcenes of miſery which lowered over Judæa [Q]. Though it cannot be poſitively determined to what period the deſcription contained in the firſt chapter may apply, it is generally ſuppoſed that the Prophet blends two ſubjects of affliction in one general conſideration, or beautiful allegory; and, that under the devaſtation to be produced by locuſts in the vegetable world, he pourtrays ſome more diſtant calamities to be produced by the armies of the Chaldæans in their invaſion of Judæa [R]. And

[N] Dorotheus writes Bethomeron. Huet propoſes to read Betharan, a place in the territory of Gad, adjacent to the tribe of Reuben; or Bethnemra in the diſtrict of Gad; or Bethabara; or Beelmeon, which was beyond Jordan, in the tribe of Reuben.

[O] Joſh. xviii. 13, 14.

[P] Jerom, though he ſuppoſes him to have been contemporary with Hoſea, conceives that he ſurvived (as well as Hoſea, Amos, Obadiah, and Jonah) the captivity of the ten tribes.

[Q] Chap. i. 4—7, 10, 16—28. and Lowth's Prælect. 15.

[R] Thoſe who will conſult Pliny, Bochart, and the naturaliſts and travellers in general, will find much cauſe to admire

And hence a defigned ambiguity in the expreſſions. In the ſecond chapter the Prophet proceeds to a more general denunciation of God's vengeance, which is delivered with ſuch force and aggravation of circumſtance, as to be in ſome meaſure deſcriptive of that final judgment which every temporal diſpenſation of the Deity muſt faintly prefigure. The ſevere declarations of Joel are intermingled with exhortations to repentance, and to the auxiliary means of promoting its effects, faſting and prayer; as alſo with promiſes of deliverance, and of a proſperity predictive of evangelical bleſſings. In treating of theſe he takes occaſion to foretel, in the cleareſt terms, the general effuſion of the Holy Spirit, which was to characterize the Goſpel diſpenſation [s]; concluding with a ſtriking deſcription of the deſtruction of Jeruſalem which followed ſoon after, and puniſhed the Jews for their obſtinate rejection of the ſacred influence; ſpeaking in terms that, as well as thoſe of our Saviour which reſembled them [t], had a double aſpect, and referred to a primary and a final diſpenſation.

In the third chapter, Joel proceeds to foretel the future aſſemblage of all nations into the valley of Jehoſhaphat [u], where the enemies of God will be

mire Joel's deſcriptive pictures of the deſtruction to be produced by locuſts; and underſtand with what force and propriety the ravages of thoſe all-devouring enemies are made figuratively to repreſent the devaſtation and havock of an invading army.

[s] Joel ii. 28—32. comp. with Acts ii. 1—21. and Acts x. 44.

[t] Joel ii. 30, 31. comp. with Matt. xxiv. 29.

[u] The original expreſſion means the valley of the Lord's judgment, from Jehovah, and Shaphat, to judge.

cut

cut off in ſome final exciſion [x]; and the Prophet concludes with the aſſurance of ſome glorious ſtate of proſperity to be enjoyed by the church: repreſenting its perfections and bleſſings under the poetical emblems of a golden age.

In conſideration of theſe important prophecies, we need not wonder that the Jews ſhould have looked up to Joel with particular reverence [y], or that he ſhould be cited as a Prophet by the evangelical writers [z].

The ſtile of Joel is equally perſpicuous and elegant; obſcure only towards the concluſion, where the beauties of his expreſſion are ſomewhat ſhaded by alluſions to circumſtances yet unaccompliſhed. His deſcriptions are highly animated; the contexture of the prophecy in the firſt and ſecond chapters is extremely curious; and the double deſtruction to be produced by locuſts, and thoſe enemies of which they were the harbingers, is painted with the moſt expreſſive force, and under terms that are reciprocally metaphorical, and admirably adapted to the twofold character of the deſcription [a]. The whole work is extremely poetical. Herman Von-der

[x] The preciſe application of his prophecy muſt be ſhewn by the event. It is ſuppoſed to relate to thoſe circumſtances predicted in Ezekiel, chap. xxxix. 5—11, Rev. xx. 8, 9.

[y] Joel is related to have received the Cabala, or traditionary explication of the law from Micah.

[z] Chap. ii. 32. comp. with Rom. x. 13. Acts ii. 16—21.

[a] Lowth's Prel. 21. Chandler, &c.

Hardt [B], a learned German, conceiving that Joel's prophecies were compoſed in elegies, endeavoured about the beginning of the ſeventeenth century, to reduce them to Iambic verſe. They undoubtedly, like the reſt of the prophecies, have a metrical arrangement.

[B] Wolfii Biblioth. Heb. tom. ii. p. 169. and Lowth's Pref. to Iſaiah.

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET

AMOS.

AMOS appears to have been contemporary with Hoſea, but it is uncertain which was the firſt honoured by divine revelations. They both began to propheſy during the time that Uzziah and Jeroboam the Second reigned over their reſpective kingdoms; and Amos ſaw his firſt viſion "two years before the earthquake [A];" which, as we learn from Zechariah [B], happened in the days of Uzziah. As there is no ſufficient reaſon to ſuppoſe that this firſt verſe was added by any writer ſubſequent to Amos: ſince he himſelf might have annexed the æra in which he beheld his viſion, when he afterwards collected his prophecies, and committed them to writing, we muſt ſuppoſe this earthquake to have happened while Uzziah and Jeroboam were contemporaries, or at leaſt within two years of that

[A] Amos i. 1. [B] Zechariah xiv. 5.

period. But little attention therefore is due to the account of Joſephus: who repreſents the ſhock to have been felt on the occaſion of Uzziah's uſurpation of the prieſtly office, when the preſumptuous King attempted to offer incenſe to the Lord [c]; which ſacrilegious attempt is by ſome placed in the twenty-fifth year [d], and by ſome ſtill more towards the concluſion of Uzziah's reign [e]; for according to the moſt extended calculations, Jeroboam and Uzziah did not flouriſh as contemporary ſovereigns above twenty-five years. Amos, however, began to propheſy ſome time between A. M. 3194 and 3219. Some have confounded him with the father of Iſaiah.

The Prophet Amos [f] was a native of Tekoa, a ſmall town in the territory of Judah, about four leagues ſouthward from Jeruſalem, and ſix ſouthward from Bethlehem [g]; adjacent to a vaſt wilderneſs,

[c] 2 Chron. xxvi. 16—21.

[d] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. IX. cap. x. xi.

[e] The daring attempt was probably made towards the concluſion of Uzziah's reign, as upon that occaſion he was ſtricken with a leproſy that laſted unto the day of his death; and his ſon Jotham took upon him the government, who was not born till after Jeroboam's death. Vid. Uſſer. Annal. ad A. M. 3221.

[f] Clemens Alex. Strom. Lib. I. Epiphan. de Vit. Prophet, עמוס, Amos, or Hamos, ſignifies βαστάζων, portans, loaded, that is, perhaps, with the burden of propheçy, chap. vii. 10. If names were intentionally deſcriptive, they muſt have been providentially impoſed, or aſſumed after the diſplay of character.

[g] Amos i. 1. 2 Chron. xi. 5, 6. Epiphanius places it in the lot of Zebulon; but Euſebius, Cyril, and St. Jerom, who

derneſs, where probably Amos might have exerciſed his profeſſion of an herdſman. Some, indeed, think that he was not born at Tekoa, but that he only reſided there when commanded by Amaziah to leave Bethel [H]. But Amos does not appear to have regarded the arrogant injunction of the Prieſt, but to have continued boldly to propheſy wherever the ſervice of God required his preſence.

Amos was by profeſſion an herdſman, and a gatherer of ſycamore fruit [I]. In the ſimplicity of former times, and in the happy climates of the Eaſt, theſe occupations were by no means conſidered in that degrading light in which they have been viewed ſince refinement hath introduced a taſte for the elegant arts of life, and eſtabliſhed faſtidious diſtinctions. He was no Prophet, as he informed Amaziah [K], neither was he a Prophet's ſon; that is, he had no regular education in the ſchools of the Prophets, but

who lived near Tekoa, place it to the ſouth of Jeruſalem, in the territory of Judah. Vid. Euſeb. de locis Ebraicis. Cyrill. Præf. Enar. in Amos. Hieron. Procem. in Amos, et de locis Ebraicis.

[H] Chap. vii. 12.

[I] Chap. vii. 14. The ſycamore fruit was a ſpecies of wild fig, ſometimes called the Egyptian fig, which is ſaid to grow from the trunk, and not from the branches of the tree. The Septuagint tranſlators interpret the Hebrew word בּוֹלֵס, κνιζων τα Συκαμινα, *opening the ſycamine fruit;* as it was thought neceſſary to open the ſkin of this fruit that it might ripen. Vid. Plinii Hiſt. Natur. Lib. XIII. cap. vii. Theophraſ. Dioſcorid. et Theod. in loc.

[K] Chap. vii. 14.

was

was called by an expreſs irreſiſtible commiſſion from God [L], to propheſy unto his people Iſrael. The Holy Spirit did not diſdain to ſpeak by the voice of the moſt humble man; and ſelected its miniſters as well from the tents of the ſhepherd, as from the palace of the ſovereign [M]; reſpecting only the qualities and not the conditions of its agents, as capable of inſpiring knowledge and eloquence where they did not exiſt.

AMOS undoubtedly compoſed his prophecies in their preſent form. He ſpeaks of himſelf as the author of them [N], and his prophetic character is eſtabliſhed not only by the admiſſion of his book into the canon, and by the teſtimony of other writers [O], but by the exact accompliſhment of many prophecies which he delivered. His work conſiſts of ſeveral diſtinct diſcourſes; the particular period of their delivery cannot now be aſcertained [P]. They chiefly reſpect the kingdom of Iſrael, though he ſometimes inveighs againſt Judah, and threatens the kingdoms that bordered on Paleſtine [Q]; the Syrians [R];

[L] Amos iii. 8. vii. 15.

[M] 1 Cor. i. 27—29.

[N] Chap. vii. 8. viii. 1, 2.

[O] Tobit ii. 6. Acts vii. 42, 43. xv. 15—17.

[P] Some have ſuppoſed that the firſt of his prophecies is contained in the ſeventh chapter; and that the contents of the other chapters were afterwards delivered at Tekoa.

[Q] Vid. two firſt chapters. Theſe prophecies were fulfilled by the victories of the Kings of Aſſyria and Babylon.

[R] Chap. i. 3—5. comp. with 2 Kings xvi. 9.

Philiſtines;

Philiſtines [s]; Tyrians [t]; Edomites [u]; Ammonites [x]; and Moabites [y]. He predicts in clear terms the captivities and the deſtruction of Iſrael, to be preceded by fearful ſigns on earth, and in the heavens [z]; concluding with aſſurances that God would not utterly deſtroy the houſe of Jacob; but after ſifting, as it were, and cleanſing the houſe of Iſrael among the nations, God ſhould again raiſe up the tabernacle, that is, the kingdom of David; to be enlarged to more than its firſt ſplendor by the acceſſion of Gentile ſubjects; and to be ſucceeded by the eſtabliſhment of that government which the Prophet deſcribes under poetical images as a bleſſed diſpenſation of ſecurity, abundance, and peace [a].

[s] Chap. i. 6, 7. comp. with 2 Kings xviii. 8. Jerem. xlvii. 1. Quint. Curt. Lib. IV. 6. Comp. alſo, chap. i. 8. with 2 Chron. xxvi. 8. and Jerem. xlvii. 5.

[t] Chap. i. 9, 10. comp. with Ezek. xxvi. 7—14. Joſeph. cont. Apion, Lib. I. and Q. Curt. Lib. IV. 13.

[u] Chap. i. 11, 12. comp. with Jerem. xxv. 9, 21. and xxvii. 3—6. 1 Macc. v. 3. and Prid. Con. Part II. ad Ann. A. C. 165. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XIII. c. ix.

[x] Chap. i. 13—15. comp. with Jerem. xxvii. 3, 6.

[y] Chap. ii. 1—3. comp. Jerem. xxvii. 3—6.

[z] Chap. viii. 8—19. Uſher remarks, that about eleven years after the time at which Amos propheſied, there were two eclipſes of the ſun; one upon the feaſt of Tabernacles, and the other at the time of the Paſſover. The prophecy, therefore, in its firſt aſpect, might allude to the ominous darkneſs which on theſe occaſions "turned their feaſts into mourning." Vid. Uſſer. Annal. ad A. M. 3213. Hieron. Theod. & Grot. in loc.

[a] Amos ix. 11—15. Acts xv. 16. Tobit xiii. 10, 11. Joel iii. 18. Chandler's Def. chap. ii. ſect. 1. p. 168. and Com. in loc. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxviii.

THE

THE zeal with which the Prophet reproved the impenitence of the people, and the ſevere threats which he denounced againſt the oppreſſion, effeminacy, and luxurious indolence that prevailed, exaſperated ſo much the court of Jeroboam, which cultivated its idolatries at Bethel, that they drew upon him the reſentment of the prieſts and princes of the people; and tradition relates, that he was [B] ill treated and put to death by Uzziah, the ſon of Amaziah [C], who was irritated by his prophecies and cenſures, but who ſoon after experienced the divine vengeance in the calamities which Amos had predicted to his family and country.

SOME writers who have adverted to the condition of Amos, have with a minute affectation of criticiſm, pretended to diſcover a certain rudeneſs and vulgarity in his ſtile; and even St. Jerom is of opinion, that he is deficient in magnificence and ſublimity: applying to him the words which St. Paul ſpeaks of himſelf [D], "that he was rude in ſpeech, though not in knowledge;" and his authority, ſays Biſhop Lowth, has influenced many commentators to repreſent him as entirely rude and void of elegance; whereas it requires but little attention to be convinced that he "is not a whit behind the very chiefeſt" of the Prophets: equal to the greateſt in ſortineſs of ſentiment, and ſcarcely inferior to any in the ſplendor of his diction, and in the elegance

[B] Cyrill. Præf. Expoſ. in Amos.

[C] Epiphan. de Vit. Proph. c. xii. Iſidor. de Vita et Morte. S. S. c. xliii. Doroth. Synop. cap. ii. Chron. Paſcal. p. 147.

[D] Hieron. Com. in Amos. 2 Cor. xi. 6.

of

of his compoſition. Mr. Locke has obſerved, that his compariſons are chiefly drawn from lions and other animals, becauſe he lived among, and was converſant with ſuch objects. But, indeed, the fineſt images and alluſions which adorn the poetical parts of ſcripture in general, are drawn from ſcenes of nature, and from the grand objects that range in her walks; and true genius ever delights in conſidering theſe as the real ſources of beauty and magnificence [E]. Amos had the opportunities, and a mind inclined to contemplate the works of the Deity, and his deſcriptions of the Almighty are particularly ſublime. Indeed, his whole work is animated with a very fine maſculine eloquence.

[E] Lowth's Præl. Poet. 21.

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET OBADIAH.

THIS Prophet hath furniſhed us with no particulars of his own origin or life, any more than of the period in which he was favoured by the divine revelations. That he received a commiſſion to propheſy is evident; as well from the admiſſion of his work into the ſacred canon, as from the completion of thoſe predictions which he delivered. According to ſome traditionary accounts [A], he was of the tribe of Ephraim; and a native of Bethacamar [B], which Epiphanius deſcribes as in the neighbourhood of Sichem; but which, according to Huet, was a town in the hilly part of the territory of Judah; and there probably he propheſied, though

[A] Pſeudo Epiphan. Doroth. Iſidor. &c.

[B] Or Bethacara, or Bethacaron. Huet propoſes to read Bethacad, a town of Samaria; but Obadiah was probably of the tribe of Judah, and propheſied againſt the inſulting enemies of his country.

ſome

ſome ſuppoſe that he was carried captive to Babylon; and others that he died in Samaria [C].

THERE is ſcarce an Obadiah mentioned in ſacred hiſtory who has not been conſidered by different writers as the ſame perſon with the Prophet. The prince whom Jehoſhaphat employed to teach in the cities of Judah [D]; the governor of Ahab's houſe, who reſcued the hundred Prophets from the vengeance of Jezebel [E]; the captain of Ahaziah, who found favour with Elijah [F]; the overſeer appointed by Joſiah to inſpect the reparation of the temple [G]; each has been ſeparately repreſented as the Prophet, though not one of them is characterized in ſcripture under that deſcription; and all of them, except perhaps the laſt, lived long before the period at which Obadiah the Prophet muſt be ſuppoſed to

[C] St. Jerom ſpeaks of his tomb at Sebaſte, formerly Samaria, and ſays, that St. Paul viſited it, and performed miracles there; but this could not contain the remains of Obadiah, for in the time of the Emperor Julian, the Gentiles emptied the ſepulchres, burnt the bones of the Prophets, and diſperſed the aſhes, after mixing them with thoſe of beaſts, about A. D. 362. Vid. Julian, Miſopogon, & Baillet Vies des Saints du V. Teſt. 14 Juin, 19 Nov.

[D] 2 Chron. xvii. 7. Sanct. Proleg. II. n. 5.

[E] 1 Kings xviii. 4. Hieron. in Abdiam, & in Epiſt. Paul. R. Selom. Jarchi, R. David Kimchi, and R. Aben-Ezra in Abd. 1. R. David Ganz, in Chron. Sixt. Senens in Abd. & Mercer. Com.

[F] 2 Kings i. 13. Clemens Alex. Strom. 1. Euſeb. Chron.

[G] 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12.

have

have flouriſhed. Equally unfounded are thoſe conjectures by which it is imagined that he was the huſband of the widow of Zarephath [H], and a diſciple of Elijah [I]; as well as that of the ancient Hebrew doctors, who conceived that he was an Idumæan, who having become a proſelyte to the Jewiſh religion, was inſpired to prophefy againſt the country of which he had forſaken the ſuperſtitions [K].

HUET, and other writers, in conſideration of the place which he holds among the Prophets in the Hebrew canon, ſuppoſe him to have been contemporary with Hoſea, Amos, and Joel. In conformity to which opinion, Huet alſo conceives that the Prophet delivered his threats againſt the Edomites [L] becauſe they took poſſeſſion of Elah after it had been conquered by Pekah and Rezin in the reign of Ahaz, and exerciſed great cruelties againſt the Jews [M]. All thoſe writers who imagine that Obadiah

[H] Lyran. in 4 Reg. c. iv. initio. The widow of Zarephath has alſo been repreſented as the mother of the Prophet Jonah.

[I] Clemens Alex. Strom. I. Euſeb. Chron. & Aben-Ezra.

[K] R. Selom. Jarchi, & R. David Kimchi, in Abd. 1. & R. Iſr. Abarb. Præf. in Prophet. Minor. Cyrill. Præf. in Abd.

[L] The Edomites were the deſcendants of Eſau; they poſſeſſed Arabia Petræa, all the country between the Red Sea and the Lake of Sodom, and ſome adjacent territory.

[M] Huet. Demonſ. Evan. in Abd. Cyrill. Præf. in Abd. Grotius, and Lightfoot's Harmon. of the Old Teſt. In our tranſlation

diah foretold the calamities which the Edomites ſuffered from the invaſion of Sennacherib, maintain that he lived in the reign of Ahaz or Hezekiah; but it is more probable that he flouriſhed about the ſame time with Ezekiel and Jeremiah; and the beſt opinions concur in ſuppoſing him to have propheſied a little after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem by Nebuchadnezzar, which happened about A. M. 3416. He predicted therefore the ſame circumſtances which thoſe Prophets had foretold againſt the Edomites [N], who had upon many occaſions favoured the enemies of Judah [O]; and who, when ſtrangers, carried their forces into captivity, and when they caſt lots upon Jeruſalem, had rejoiced at the deſtruction, and inſulted the children of Judah in their affliction [P].

tranſlation of 2 Kings xvi. 6. no mention is made of the Edomites, but in the Vulgate it is rendered "the Edomites came to Elah." The words Aram and Edom are written in the Hebrew nearly in the ſame manner; and Calmet thinks that it ſhould be written Edom inſtead of Syria, through the verſe, as the Edomites had previouſly poſſeſſion of Elah, but it does not appear that the Syrians had, for whom it could not therefore be recovered. Still, however, the Chaldæan, Hebrew, Syriac, and Arabic verſions, as well as Joſephus, ſuppoſe that Rezin took Elah for the Syrians, and eſtabliſhed them there. Vid. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. IX. cap. xi. Grotius, &c.

[N] Comp. Obad. ver. 3, 4. with Jerem. xlix. 16. Obad. ver. 5. with Jerem. xlix. 9. Obad. ver. 8. with Jer. xlix. 7. Obad. ver. 16. with Jer. xxv. 15—21. and xlix. 7—12. Vid. Ezek. xxv. 12, 14. and ch. xxxv.

[O] 2 Chron. xxviii. 17. Joel iii. 19.

[P] Ver. 11—14. Pſalm cxxxvii. 7.

THE Prophet, after deſcribing the pride and cruelty of the Edomites, declares that though they dwelt in fancied ſecurity among the clefts of the rocks [Q], yet that the "men of Teman [R] ſhould be diſmayed," and "every one of the Mount of Eſau ſhould be cut off by ſlaughter." That the men who had confederated with them againſt Jacob [S], and been ſupported by them as their allies, ſhould inflict the puniſhment of their malevolence. The Prophet concludes with conſolatory aſſurances of future reſtoration and proſperity to the Jews, to whom ſhould ariſe deliverance from Zion: Saviours who ſhould judge the nations; and a ſpiritual kingdom, appropriated and conſecrated to the Lord. Theſe prophecies began to be completed about five years after, when Nebuchadnezzar ravaged Idumæa [T]; and diſpoſſeſſed the Edomites of much of Arabia-Petræa, which they never afterwards recovered. But they were ſtill farther fulfilled in the conqueſts of the Maccabees over the remainder of the Edomites [U]; and they received their final accompliſhment

[Q] The ſouth part of Paleſtine, from Eleutheropolis to Petra, (the ancient capital of Idumæa) and Elah, was full of rocks, inhabited by the natives. Vid. Hieron. in loc.

[R] Teman, a city, or as ſome ſay, a province of Idumæa, ſo-called from Teman, grandſon of Eſau. Vid. Jerem. xlix. 7. Amos i. 12. Vid. Hieron. & Euſeb. in loc. Ebraicis.

[S] Obadiah uſes the expreſſion, "thy brother Jacob," in alluſion to Eſau's hatred againſt Jacob. Vid. Gen. xxvii. 41. a primary ſource of God's diſpleaſure againſt the Edomites.

[T] Uſſer. ad A. M. 3419. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. c. xii.

[U] 1 Macc. v. 3, 65.

in

in the advent of that Redeemer whom preceding Saviours had foreſhewn.

OBADIAH's name implies, the ſervant of the Lord: a title by which Moſes was diſtinguiſhed [x], and in which St. Paul gloried. The Prophet's work is ſhort, but compoſed with much beauty: it unfolds a very intereſting ſcene of prophecy, and an inſtructive leſſon againſt human confidence and malicious exultation.

[x] Numb. xii. 7.

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET JONAH.

THOUGH Jonah be placed fifth in the order of the Minor Prophets, both in the Hebrew and in the Septuagint copies, he is generally conſidered as the moſt ancient of all the Prophets, not excepting Hoſea. Jonah was the ſon of Amittai, of the tribe of Zabulon; and was born at Gath-hepher [A], which is ſuppoſed to have been the ſame place with Jotapeta: a town remarkable for having ſuſtained, under the conduct of Joſephus, a ſiege againſt the Roman army. It was ſituated in the land of

[A] Vid. 2 Kings xiv. 25. The ſame place probably with Gittah-hepher. Vid. Joſh. xix. 13. Dorotheus erroneouſly affirms, that he was born at Carjathmaus, or Carjathjarim, in the tribe of Judah; and buried at Saar, (Tyre in Phœnicia,) and St. Jerom has taken the trouble to refute ſome who maintained that Jonah was born at another Geth, near Lyddæ, or Dioſpolis, confounding Geth with Gath-hepher, and Dioſpolis with Diocæſarea.

Zabulon,

Zabulon, near Siphorim [B], towards Tiberias, where was the canton of Ophir, or Hepher. St. Jerom informs us, that the Prophet's ſepulchre was ſhewn there in his time; and there the natives ſtill believe it to exiſt [C]. Since this place, as indeed all the land of Zabulon, was in Galilee [D], it may be produced in confutation of the illiberal aſſertion of the Phariſees, that out of Galilee ariſeth no Prophet [E]. The Orientals now ſhew his tomb at Moſul [F], which they ſuppoſe to be the ſite where Nineveh ſtood; and the Turks have built a moſque there, in which they pretend to poſſeſs his relics; while others, who reſide at Gath-hepher, now a little Bourgade, ſhew a Mauſoleum of Jonah in a ſubterraneous chapel, incloſed in a moſque, and compel travellers to enter barefoot. Such are the conteſts of ſuperſtitious reverence, or the claims of mercenary rivalſhip.

[B] Now called Diocæſarea. Vid. Hieron. Procem. Com. in Jonam.

[C] Benjam. Itiner. et Brocardus Argentoratenſis Deſcrip. Terræ ſanctæ.

[D] Iſaiah ix. 1. Matt. iv. 13.

[E] John vii. 52. Nahum was a Galilæan by birth, though of the tribe of Simeon; and Malachi, as ſome ſay.

[F] Thevenot's Travels, Part II. Book I. ch. xi. p. 50. Moſul, now the ſeat of the Patriarch of the Neſtorians, is on the Weſtern ſide of the Tigris; and is by ſome aſſerted to have been a ſuburb of Nineveh, which is ſaid to have been on the Eaſtern ſide, though Pliny maintains it to have been ſituated on the Weſtern ſide. Vid. Plinii Lib. VI. cap. xiii. Benjam. Tudela, Itiner. Marſham Chron. Sæc. xviii. p. 558.

Some Jewiſh writers report upon a very groundleſs fancy, that Jonah was the ſon of the widow of Zarephath, whom Elijah raiſed from the dead [G]; but Jonah repreſents himſelf as an Hebrew, and Zarephath was a city of Sidon [H]. He is generally ſuppoſed to have flouriſhed in the reigns of Joaſh and Jeroboam the Second, Kings of Iſrael; the former of whom began to reign, A. M. 3163, the latter died A. M. 3220. In the Second Book of Kings [I], Jonah is ſaid to have propheſied concerning Jeroboam, that he ſhould "reſtore the coaſt of Iſrael;" which prophecy, now not extant, was perhaps delivered in the reign of Jehoahaz, the grandfather of Jeroboam, when the kingdom of Iſrael was greatly oppreſſed by the Syrians [K]; and therefore it is probable that Biſhop Lloyd does not place him much too high in ſuppoſing that he propheſied towards the latter end of Jehu's reign; or in the beginning of that of Jehoahaz, when Hazael by his cruel

[G] Hieron. & Iſidor. & Quæſt. ad Antioch. in Append. ad Oper. S. Athan. Qu. lxv. Jonah was the ſon of Amittai, which word implies Truth in the Hebrew, and the widow had ſaid to Elijah, "The word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." Vid. 1 Kings xvii. 24. Hence the Rabbinical conceit. Others make him the ſon of the woman of Shunem, a place in the tribe of Iſſachar. Vid. 2 Kings iv. 16. Some maintain, that he was the Prophet who was ſent to anoint Jehu King over Iſrael. Vid. 2 Kings ix. 1, 2. R. David Kimchi, &c.

[H] Comp. Luke iv. 26. with Jonah i. 9.

[I] 2 Kings xiv. 25.

[K] Comp. 2 Kings xiii. 3—7. with 2 Kings xiv. 26. & Joſeph.

treatment

treatment of Iſrael, was verifying the predictions of Eliſha [L]. So that though Jonah might be contemporary with Hoſea, Amos, and Iſaiah, he appears to have uttered the prophecy alluded to, before any were delivered of thoſe now extant in the writings of the Prophets; and the prophecy concerning Nineveh, of which the publication is related in this book, muſt, contrary to the opinion of many writers [M], have been delivered long before the time that Obadiah propheſied.

This book, which is chiefly narrative, furniſhes us with an account of the mandate that Jonah, who was more eſpecially a Prophet to the Gentiles, received to preach againſt Nineveh, the metropolis of that mighty kingdom of Aſſyria, which was employed by God as the "rod of his anger againſt Iſrael and Judah [N]." It relates that Jonah, who was of a timid character [O], aware of the pride and falſe confidence of a city, equally diſtinguiſhed for its magnificence and corruption; for its careleſs merriment, and inconſiderate diſſipation [P], and conſcious

[L] 2 Kings vii. 12. and 2 Kings xiii. 3, 4, 22.

[M] Clem. Alex. Strom. Euſeb. Præp. Lib. X. c. xiv. Cyrill. Præf. in Jon. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxvii. Theod. Procem. in 12 Proph.

[N] Iſaiah x. 5.

[O] Jonah, or Jonas, as it is written in the Greek, ſignifies a dove, a name probably deſcriptive of his gentle diſpoſition.

[P] By Zephaniah it is called the rejoicing city, Κρεισσων Νινυ ευφραινουσης (better than merry Nineveh,) was a proverbial compariſon. Nineveh was greater than Babylon. Vid. Strabo, Lib. X. p. 737. Diodor. Siculus, Lib. XVI. p. 65. Edit. Stephan.

that the Lord was "slow to anger," and loth to execute his threats, was afraid to carry the message of wrath. He knew that the Prophets were exposed to insult from such as confidently maintained that the day of the Lord would not arise; and who challenged God to hasten his work [Q]. He resolved therefore "to flee from the presence of the Lord," that is, possibly, as some have interpreted the expression, to flee from the council of God in the land of Israel; or perhaps simply to avoid the divine appointment; but in this foolish attempt in his flight to Tarshish [R], which he records with a very ingenuous and repentant fidelity, he was arrested and punished by a miracle; and when delivered from the jaws of destruction, he was compelled to utter the doleful message, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh" (if it continue impenitent) "shall be overthrown." The King, who according to Usher, was Pul, or possibly a predecessor of that monarch, alarmed by the prophetic threat conveyed to him under such miraculous circumstances, proclaimed a solemn fast and supplication for

[Q] Amos v. 18. Isa. v. 19. Jerem. xvii. 15. Ezek. xii. 22.

[R] The Tarshish here mentioned was probably the same place with Tarsis, or Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia, where St. Paul received his birth; and Jonah might be cast on shore somewhere on the coast of Cilicia. There were likewise places of the name of Tarshish in India and in Spain. Vid. 2 Chron. xx. 36. Bochart. Phaleg. Lib. III. c. xxvii. Stephan. de Urb. 16. and Wells's Geograph. of New Test. Part II.

pardon;

pardon [s]; and as God's threats are conditional, and his anger ever ſoftened by repentance, he ſuſpended the ſentence which he had pronounced, till about 160 years after, when the wickedneſs of the people provoked its execution. The laſt chapter repreſents the unreaſonable diſpleaſure of Jonah at God's mercy, and his mortification at having been employed to deliver a prediction which was not to be accompliſhed; more ſolicitous for his own reputation than for the glory of God, or for the ſecurity of a kingdom. The Almighty is deſcribed as condeſcending gently to reprove the Prophet; and to juſtify his own conduct by a miraculous illuſtration, and by an appeal to the compaſſion of the Prophet, which Jonah records with a tacit confeſſion of the equity and goodneſs of God.

It muſt be remarked, that the miracle by which God puniſhed the unbecoming flight of Jonah was, agreeably to the figurative arrangements of the Old Teſtament, rendered ſymbolical of an event that was to occur under the New. The Prophet, in this inſtance a ſign of Chriſt [t], was ſwallowed up by a great fiſh [u], as our Saviour was admitted into the jaws

[s] Uſſer. Annal. A. M. 3233. Lloyd's Tables. Newton on the Prophecies, Diſſ. IX. Vol. i. p. 256.

[t] Matt. xii. 39, 40. xvi. 4. Luke xi. 39, 40. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxx.

[u] The fiſh is generally ſuppoſed to have been a whale. The word uſed by the apoſtle (Matt. xii. 40.) κῆτος, Cetus, means any large fiſh, as does the Hebrew word in Jonah, דג גדול, Dag Gadol. Some ſuppoſe it to have been the Canis Charcarias,

jaws of death, and for a ſimilar continuance of time; both were detained three days and three nights [x] entombed in the grave. The objections that have been made to this miracle are certainly unworthy of attention [y], ſince conſiderations of what may or may not be probable, are clearly not applicable to works which exceed the meaſure of human power, and deviate from the courſe of human events, and which, indeed, in their proper definition, are deſcribed as unprecedented. The miraculous preſervation and deliverance of Jonah was ſurely not more remarkable or deſcriptive of almighty power than were the multiplied wonders in the wilderneſs [z], the protection of Daniel, or the

Charcarias, the lamia, or ſea-dog. The Rabbins talk of a fiſh created on purpoſe from the beginning of the world; and many other abſurd notions have been entertained on the ſubject. Vid. Scaliger. cont. Cardan. Bochart. Hieroz. P. II. Lib. V. c. xii. Druſius in Jonam. Calmet's Diſſert.

[x] As the Hebrew language has not any word which defines a natural day, the Jews deſcribe what the Greeks call νυχθημερον, by a day and a night. The ſpace of time, therefore, which conſiſts of one whole revolution of twenty-four hours, and part of two other days, is properly expreſſed in Hebrew by three days and three nights; the length of time during which Jonah and Chriſt were reſpectively ſepulchred in the fiſh and in the grave. Vid. Patrick in ch. i. 17.

[y] Herman Von-der Hardt abſurdly undertook to turn the whole book into a kind of prophetic ſcheme or parable, though there is not a ſhadow of reaſon to ſuppoſe it any other than a literal narration of actual events. Vid. Carpzov. Introd. ad Lib. V. T. Par. III. p. 349.

[z] Aut omnia divina miracula credenda non ſunt aut hoc cur non credatur cauſa nulla eſt. Vid. Auguſt. Epiſt. I. in Quæſt. 6. de Jona, n. 30.

reſurrection

reſurrection of the widow's ſon; all were poſitive violations of the general rules of nature.

Among other teſtimonies given to the prophetic character of Jonah, may be reckoned that of Tobit, who profeſſed a firm confidence in the accompliſhment of Jonah's prediction againſt Nineveh [A], and whoſe ſon, indeed, afterwards lived to witneſs its completion. The ſacred writers, likewiſe, and our Lord himſelf [B], ſpeak of him as a Prophet of conſiderable eminence.

As the word with which this book begins is frequently uſed as a connexive particle, ſome writers have conceived that theſe prophecies are but compendious extracts of a larger collection; but the book appears in its preſent ſtate to be an entire and perfect work; and the particle with which it begins is here only a common introductory expreſſion. True it is, that Jonah, as probably all the Prophets, delivered ſome prophecies which are no longer extant; as appears from the paſſage in the Second Book of Kings before alluded to [C]; and theſe, as intended by their ſpeedy completion only to excite the confidence of contemporaries, were probably not committed to writing: ſuch chiefly being compoſed for the canon as were deſigned for the permanent inſtruction of the church. There is, however, no

[A] Tobit xiv. 4—6, 15.

[B] 2 Kings xiv. 25. Matt. xii. 39, 41. xvi. 4. Luke xi. 29. Vid. alſo, 2 Eſdras i. 39. and Clement. Epiſt. I. ad Rom. c. vii.

[C] 2 Kings xiv. 25.

ſufficient

ſufficient evidence to prove the authenticity of ſome other predictions aſcribed to Jonah by Dorotheus and others [D]: as that "when they ſhould ſee a ſtone" (i. e. Chriſt the corner-ſtone) "bitterly lamenting, and all the nations in Jeruſalem, then ſhould the city be entirely deſtroyed;" which pretended prophecy alluded to our Saviour's weeping over Jeruſalem [E], and to the aſſemblage of the Gentiles, which preceded the deſtruction of the holy city.

THE ſtile of Jonah is narrative and ſimple; the beautiful prayer contained in the ſecond chapter has been juſtly admired. The book furniſhes us with a fine deſcription of the power and mercies of God.

THE fame of Jonah's deliverance appears to have ſpread among the heathen nations, and the Greeks who were accuſtomed to adorn the memory of their heroes by every remarkable event and embelliſhment which they could appropriate: added to the fictitious adventures of Hercules, that of having continued three days without injury in the belly of a dog ſent againſt him by Neptune [F]. The fable of Arion and the Dolphin, of which the date is fixed at a time nearly coeval with the period of Jonah, is poſſibly a miſrepreſentation of particulars recorded in this ſacred book.

[D] Epiphan. Doroth. & Chron. Paſcal.

[E] Luke xix. 41.

[F] Lycophron et Iſaacus Tzetzes, Cyrill. et Theophylact. in Jon. Sext. Emp. adv. Gram. Lib. I. cap. xii. Phavorinus in τριεσπερῶ, et Gazæus in Dialog. de Immort. Anim.

OF

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET MICAH.

MICAH was unqueſtionably the author of this Book, and he ſpeaks in that character [A]. In the Hebrew manuſcripts he is placed the ſixth; and in the Septuagint copies the third in order of the twelve Prophets. He calls himſelf a Moraſthite [B], and is ſuppoſed to have been a native of Moraſthi, a village ſituated near the city of Eleutheropolis, in the ſouthern part of Judah; a place diſtinguiſhed by St. Jerom [C] from Mareſhah, mentioned in this book [D], and in Joſhua [E].

MICAH

[A] Chap. iii. 1, 8.

[B] Chap. i. 1. Jerem. xxvi. 18.

[C] Hieron. Prol. in Micah. Epit. Paul. c. vi. Euſeb. de loc. Ebraic. Druſius erroneouſly imagines that Moraſthi might be the ſame place with Moreſheth-gath, mentioned in Micah, ch. i. 14.

[D] Chap. i. 15.

[E] Joſh. xv. 44. St. Jerom, however, places this town likewiſe in the territory of Judah, and ſays, that the ruins of it

MICAH ſpeaks only of the Kings of Judah; and he propheſied in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, contemporary with whom were Pekah and Hoſea, the two laſt Kings of Iſrael. Micah then began to propheſy ſoon after Iſaiah, Hoſea, Joel, and Amos; and he propheſied between A. M. 3246, when Jotham began to reign, and A. M. 3305, when Hezekiah died: but probably not during the whole of that period. It is related by Epiphanius [F], and the Greek writers who copied him, that Micah was thrown from a precipice and killed by Jehoram, ſon of Ahab, whom he erroneouſly calls King of Judah, but who really was King of Iſrael; and whoſe *grandſon* Jehoram lived at leaſt 130 years before Micah. But theſe writers [G] ſeem to have confounded Micah with Micaiah the ſon of Imlah, who flouriſhed in Iſrael, and propheſied evil of Ahab [H]; and Micah does not appear to have ſuffered martyrdom, as may be collected from a paſſage in Jeremiah [I]; but probably died in peace under the reign of the good King Hezekiah. St. Jerom ſays, that his tomb was at Moraſthi, and converted into a

it were extant in his time. Joſephus repreſents it to have been in Idumæa. Vid. Joſeph. Lib. XIII. c. xxiii. et de Bell. Jud. Lib. I. c. ii. Antiq. Lib. XIV. c. x. 2 Chron. xi. 8. xiv. 10.

[F] Epiphanius erroneouſly calls him a Moraſthite of the tribe of Ephraim; and ſays, that he was buried at Marathi.

[G] Athan. in Synop. Euſeb. Chron.

[H] 1 Kings xxii. 8—28.

[I] Jerem. xxvi. 18, 19.

church

church in his time [K]. And Sozomen [L] profeſſes to have heard, that his body was ſhewn, in a divine viſion, to Zebennus, Biſhop of Eleutheropolis, in the reign of Theodoſius the Great, near a place called Berathſatia, which probably might be a corruption of Moraſthi, ſince Sozomen deſcribes it to have been at nearly the ſame diſtance from Jeruſalem that St. Jerom places Moraſthi [M].

MICAH, who received the divine revelations by viſion [N], was appointed to preach againſt both Iſrael and Judah; and executed his commiſſion with great animation and zeal. One of his predictions is related [O] to have ſaved the life of Jeremiah; who under the reign of Jehoiakim would have been put to death for prophelying the deſtruction of the temple, had it not appeared that Micah had foretold the ſame thing under Hezekiah above 100 years before [P]. Micah is mentioned as a Prophet in the book of Jeremiah [Q], and in the New Teſtament [R].

[K] Hieron. Ep. xxvii. ſeu Epitap. Paul. c. vi.

[L] Sozom. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. VII. c. xxix. & Nicephor. Lib. XII. c. xlviii.

[M] About ten ſtadia, which anſwers nearly to the two miles of St. Jerom. Some place Micah's tomb on the declivity of Mount Olivet.

[N] "The word of the Lord" came to him. Vid. Dr. Wheeler.

[O] Jerem. xxvi. 18—24.

[P] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. c. vii. Micah iii. 12.

[Q] Jerem. xxvi. 18. comp. with Micah iii. 12.

[R] Matt. ii. 5. and John vii. 42.

He

He is imitated by ſucceeding Prophets [s], as he himſelf had borrowed the expreſſions of thoſe who preceded, or flouriſhed at the ſame time with him [t]. Our Saviour himſelf, indeed, condeſcended to ſpeak in the language of the Prophet [u].

Dr. Wells [x] ſuppoſes Micah's prophecies to have been uttered in the order in which they are here written. He maintains that the contents of the firſt chapter were delivered in the time of Jotham and Pekah; and that it conſiſts of general invective againſt the ſins and idolatry of Iſrael and Judah, to be puniſhed by impending judgments. What is compriſed between the firſt verſe of the ſecond chapter and the eighth verſe of the fourth, he aſſigns to the reign of Ahaz, and his contemporaries Pekah and Hoſea; and the twelfth verſe of the third chapter, which is attributed by Jeremiah to the reign of Hezekiah [y], Wells conceives to have been ſpoken in the year when Hezekiah was partner in the kingdom with Ahaz, in the laſt year of the reign of the latter; and the remainder of the book the learned commentator aſſigns to the reign of Hezekiah. But at whatever period theſe prophecies were delivered,

[s] Comp. Zephaniah iii. 19. with Micah iv. 7. And Ezek. xxii. 27. with Micah iii. 11.

[t] Comp. Micah iv. 1—3. and Iſaiah ii. 2—4. Micah iv. 13. with Iſaiah xli. 15. Micah began to prophecy rather later than Iſaiah.

[u] Comp. Micah vii. 6. with Matt. x. 35, 36.

[x] Preface to Micah.

[y] Jerem. xxvi. 18, 19.

they

they contain many remarkable particulars. The Prophet predicted in clear terms, the invaſion of Shalmaneſer [z] and Sennacherib [A], and their triumph over Iſrael and Judah; the captivities, diſperſion [B], and deliverance [C] of Iſrael; the ceſſation of prophecy [D]; the deſtruction of Aſſyria [E], and of Babylon [F], the repreſentatives of the enemies of the Chriſtian church; the birth of the Everlaſting Ruler at Bethlehem Ephratah [G]; the eſtabliſhment and exaltation of Chriſt's kingdom over all nations [H]; the influence of the Goſpel [I]; and the deſtruction of Jeruſalem [K].

THE beauty and elegance of Micah's ſtile have been much admired. Biſhop Lowth has characterized

[z] Micah i. 6—8. and 2 Kings xvii. 4, 6.

[A] Micah i. 9—16. 2 Kings xviii. 13.

[B] Chap. v. 7, 8.

[C] Chap. ii. 12. iv. 10. v. 8.

[D] Chap. iii. 6, 7.

[E] Chap. v. 5, 6. Some imagine that Micah foretels in this prophecy the victories to be obtained by the leaders of the Medes and Babylonians who took Nineveh. Others ſuppoſe him to ſpeak of the ſeven Maccabees with their eight royal ſucceſſors, from Ariſtobulus to Antigonus. It may perhaps bear a reference to ſome higher triumph. Vid. Ezek. ch. xxxviii. and xxxix.

[F] Chap. vii. 8, 10. Mede's Diſcourſes, p. 796.

[G] Micah v. 2. comp. with Matt. ii. 6. and John vii. 42.

[H] Chap. iv. 1, 2.

[I] Chap. iv. 1—8. comp. with Iſa. ii. 2—4.

[K] Chap. iii. 12. This prophecy was fulfilled by the deſtruction of Jeruſalem by Veſpaſian, when, according to Chriſt's prediction, not one ſtone was left on another. Vid. Joſeph. Bell. Jud. Lib. VII. ch. xvii.

it as compreſſed, ſhort, nervous, and ſharp. It is often elevated, and very poetical, though occaſionally obſcure from ſudden tranſition of ſubject.

MICAH, after ſhewing what is good for man, and that the Lord requireth of him "to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God [L]," concludes his book with a fine prophetic aſſurance of God's mercies, who ſhould caſt away the ſins of his people, and perform the promiſes which he had ſworn unto Abraham.

[L] Chap. vi. 8.

OF

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET

NAHUM.

NAHUM deſcribes himſelf as an Elkoſhite: which ſome have conſidered as a patronymick expreſſion, conceiving it to imply his being a deſcendant of Elkoſha; but which is generally ſuppoſed to intimate that he was born at Elkoſh, or Elkoſha, a ſmall village in Galilee, of which St. Jerom profeſſes to have ſeen the ruins [A]. Nahum is ſaid to have been of the tribe of Simeon [B]; but amidſt a variety of opinions, it is difficult to determine what preciſe time ſhould be aſſigned for the period of his exiſt-

[A] Epiphanius and Dorotheus place it near Begabar, or Bethabara, where St. John baptized his diſciples. Vid. Origen in Joh. But St. Jerom repreſents it as at a great diſtance from that town. He ſays that it was called Elkegai. It is not mentioned in ſcripture, or by Joſephus.

[B] He was probably in Judah when he received divine revelations. Bethabara was far from the territory of Simeon.

ence. Joſephus [c] aſſerts, that he lived in the time of Jotham, King of Judah: in which caſe he may be ſuppoſed to have propheſied againſt Nineveh, when Tiglath-Pileſer, King of Aſſyria, carried captive the natives of Galilee, and other parts [d], about A. M. 3264. The Jews place him ſo late as the reign of Manaſſeth [e]. The moſt probable opinion is, that though Nahum might have lived in the reigns of both theſe Kings, yet he delivered theſe prophecies in Judæa in the reign of Hezekiah [f]; for he appears to ſpeak of the taking of No-Ammon, a city of Egypt [g], and of the inſolent meſſengers of Sennacherib [h], as of things paſt; and he likewiſe deſcribes the people of Judah as ſtill in their own

[c] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. IX. cap. xi. ſect. 3. Edit. Hudſon. Joſephus ſays, alſo, that Nahum's predictions concerning Nineveh came to paſs in 115 years after; in which caſe the Prophet muſt have delivered them in the reign of Ahaz, the ſon of Jotham, when Salmaneſer invaded Samaria, and rendered it tributary.

[d] 2 Kings xv. 29.

[e] Seder Olam, Grot. Sixt. Senens. &c. Clemens Alexandrinus places Nahum between Daniel and Ezekiel, and ſuppoſes him to have flouriſhed during the captivity. Vid. Strom. I. p. 92.

[f] Hieron. Theodor. and Theophyl. Proœm. in Nahum.

[g] Chap. iii. 8. This city is called alſo Dioſpolis, and was the ſame place that was called Thebes by Homer. It was probably firſt taken by Sennacherib, in his expedition to Egypt, before he marched to Jeruſalem. Vid. Calmet in loc. Prid. Con. A. 713. It was afterwards deſtroyed by Nebuchadnezzar.

[h] Chap. ii. 13. comp. with 2 Kings xviii. 17. et ſeq.

country,

country, and desirous of celebrating their festivals. He cannot therefore be supposed to have prophesied before the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, since the expedition of Sennacherib against this Prince was in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign; and therefore he probably prophesied between A. M. 3283, when Shalmaneser carried Israel captive into Assyria [I]; and A. M. 3294, when Sennacherib was meditating the destruction of Jerusalem.

At this period of perplexity and distress, when the fate of Samaria was present to the apprehensions of Judah; when her own cities had been taken by Sennacherib, and Hezekiah had drained his treasury, and even despoiled the temple in the vain hope of averting the fury of Sennacherib [K]; then was Nahum raised up in consolation [L] to Judah, and to proclaim destruction "to him that imagined evil against the Lord [M]." At this time Sennacherib still continued to send arrogant messages, and blasphemous letters: threatening the destruction of Jerusalem; insulting Hezekiah, and deriding the confidence of his people, who trusted in the Lord [N]. Already had Isaiah been commissioned to send an assurance of protection to Jerusalem [O]; and Na-

[I] 2 Kings xvii. 6. Nahum ii. 2.

[K] 2 Kings xviii. 16.

[L] Nahum signifies a comforter. Vid. Hieron.

[M] Chap. i. 11.

[N] 2 Kings xviii. and xix. 2 Chron. xxxii. Isaiah xxxii. Nahum i. 7. comp. with Isa. xxxvi. 15.

[O] 2 Kings xix. 20—34.

hum conſpired with him to promiſe deliverance to Hezekiah [P] from the Aſſyrian yoke; and to anticipate with prophetic exultation the appearance of welcome meſſengers, that ſhould bring good tidings, and publiſh peace to Judah; who ſhould celebrate her ſolemn feaſts ſecure from invaſion, as her enemy "was utterly cut off [Q]."

NAHUM afterwards in his two laſt chapters proceeds to foretel the future downfal of the Aſſyrian empire; renewing thoſe denunciations of wrath which about ninety years before Jonah had uttered againſt Nineveh, whoſe repentance was but of ſhort duration; and predicting in the moſt deſcriptive manner, that final deſtruction which was effected probably by Nabopalaſſer and Cyaxares, A. M. 3392 [R], but certainly by the Medes and Babylonians; whoſe confederate forces aſſaulted the Aſſyrians un-

[P] Chap. i. 13.

[Q] Nahum i. 15. 2 Kings xix. 35. Iſa. xxxvii. 36, 37. Beroſus and Herodotus give a diſguiſed account of the miraculous deſtruction of Sennacherib's army. Vid. Beroſus ap. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. c. i. ii. Herod. Lib. II. c. cxli.

[R] Diodorus Siculus ſpeaks of the taking of Nineveh by Arbaces and Beleſis; which muſt have happened at a preceding time. Herodotus, however, aſſerts, that it was taken by Cyaxares; and ſince the account of Diodorus minutely correſponds with the prophetic deſcription of Nahum, it is probable that he confounds the two captures, as he miſtakes the ſituation of Nineveh, placing it on the Euphrates. Uſher places the final deſtruction of Nineveh fourteen years earlier than Prideaux, who aſſigns it to A. M. 3392. Vid. Diod. Sic. Lib. II. Herod. Lib. II. Marſham's Chron. Sæc. xviii. p. 556.

expect-

expectedly, " while they were folden together as thorns, and while they were drunken as drunkards [s];" when " the gates of the river were opened, the palace diſſolved [t]," and an " over-running flood" aſſiſted the conquerors in their devaſtation [u]; who took an endleſs ſtore of ſpoil of ſilver and of gold [x], making an utter end of the place of Nineveh [y]: of that vaſt and populous city, whoſe walls were an hundred feet high [z], and capable of admitting three chariots abreaſt upon them, and fortified with fifteen hundred towers, in walls of two hundred feet high [a]. So totally, indeed, was this city deſtroyed, that in the ſecond century after Chriſt, not a veſtige of it remained to aſcertain the ſpot on which it ſtood. Its ſituation has long been a matter of uncertainty and diſpute [b].

This

[s] Chap. i. 10.

[t] Chap. ii. 6.

[u] Chap. i. 8. Diodor. Sic. Lib. II. p. 80. Edit. Stephan. p. 113. Alex. Polyhiſt. ap. Syncel.

[x] Nahum ii. 9. and Diod. Lib. II. p. 81.

[y] Chap. i. 8, 9. and Newton's ninth Diſſertation on Prophecies, vol. i.

[z] Diod. Sic. Lib. II. p. 65. Edit. Stephan. Strabo, Lib. XVI. p. 737. ed. Par.

[a] Lucian, επισχ. prop. fin. Lucian was a native of Samoſata, a city on the Euphrates, in a country adjacent to Nineveh.

[b] Bochart. Phaleg. Lib. IV. cap. xx. col. 248. Marſhami Chronic. Sæc. xviii. p. 559. The beſt ſupported opinions concur to place the ancient Nineveh (for ſome ſuppoſed there

This illuſtrious prophecy thus remarkably accompliſhed in little more than a century after it was delivered, affords a ſignal evidence of the inſpiration of Nahum; and a ſtriking leſſon of humility to human pride. It muſt have furniſhed much conſolation to the tribes who were carried away captive by the King of Aſſyria, as well as to thoſe of Benjamin and Judah; and all muſt have rejoiced with the hope of deliverance, to hear that their conquerors ſhould in time be conquered, their city levelled to the duſt, and their empire overturned. The book in which theſe intereſting prophecies are contained, is juſtly conſidered by Biſhop Lowth as a complete and perfect poem, of which the conduct and imagery are truly admirable.

The fire, ſpirit, and ſublimity of Nahum, are unequalled. His ſcenes are painted with great variety and ſplendour. The exordium of his work, in which he deſcribes the attributes of God, is auguſt; and the preparations for the attack, as well as the deſtruction of Nineveh, are repreſented with ſingular effect [c]. The art with which the immediate deſtruction of the Aſſyrians under Sennacherib is intermingled with the future ruin of the empire, affords a very elegant ſpecimen of the manner in

were two, and ſome three cities of that name) on the Tigris. There are ruins on the eaſtern ſide of the river, ſaid to be thoſe of Nineveh. Vid. Tavernier in Harris, vol. ii. Book II. ch. iv. But probably they are the ruins of Perſian Nineveh.

[c] Lowth's Prælect. 21.

which

which the Prophets delight to introduce preſent and diſtant events under one point of view. The allegorical pictures in this book are remarkably beautiful [D].

NEITHER hiſtory nor tradition furniſh us with any account of Nahum, or of the period of his death. His tomb, or pretended tomb, was formerly ſhewn in a village named Bethogabra, now called Giblin, near Emmaus.

[D] Chap. ii. 7, 11, 12.

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET HABAKKUK.

SOME writers whoſe relations are probably founded on traditionary accounts, deſcribe Habakkuk as a native of Bethzakar [A]; and affirm that he was of the tribe of Simeon. Some ſuppoſe him to have flouriſhed in the reign of Manaſſeth [B]; others in that of Joſiah [C]; and ſome have placed him ſo late as Zedekiah [D]; but the moſt approved opinion is, that he propheſied under Jehoiakim, who aſcended the throne A. M. 3395, and reigned over Judah eleven years.

[A] Epiphanius calls it Bethſocher; Dorotheus, Biticuchar. Bathzacharias is mentioned in 1 Macc. vi. 32. this was between Jeruſalem and Bethſura; and Joſephus deſcribes it as a narrow defile. Vid. Antiq. Lib. XII. c. iv. Bezeth is ſpoken of in 1 Macc. vii. 19.

[B] Seder Olam Rabba, and Zuta. Abarb. Joſeph Antiq. Lib. X. c. iv.

[C] Wells, Patrick, &c.

[D] Clem. Alex. Strom. 1. Epiphan. &c.

As

As the Prophet makes no mention of the Aſſyrians, and ſpeaks of the Chaldæan invaſions as near at hand [E], he probably lived after the deſtruction of the Aſſyrian empire in the fall of Nineveh, A. M. 3392, and not long before the devaſtation of Judæa by the victories of Nebuchadnezzar. Habakkuk was then nearly contemporary with, and predicted the ſame events as Jeremiah; and he probably lived to witneſs the completion of that part of his prophecy which related to the afflictions of his country.

HABAKKUK is ſaid, as well as Jeremiah, to have choſen to remain amidſt the ſad ſcenes of a deſolate and deſerted land, rather than follow his conquered countrymen into captivity, and even to have refuſed to accompany thoſe who afterwards retired into Egypt. There are no proofs, however, that, as ſome writers [F] have aſſerted, he lived till within two years of the return of the Jews, under Zerubbabel, which happened A. M. 3468; but he appears to have died in his own country, and poſſibly he was buried at Cela, in the territory of Judah, where his tomb was ſhewn in the time of Euſebius [G].

IT muſt be obſerved, that ſome Jews have on very chimerical grounds, pretended that our Prophet

[E] Chap. i. 5. ii. 3. iii. 2, 16—19.

[F] Hieron. Procem. in Habac.

[G] Euſeb. Topic. who calls it by its old name Ceila, which is, perhaps, the ſame place with Echela and Betzekar. Sozomen ſays, that Habakkuk's body was diſcovered there in the time of Theodotion the Elder. Vid. Sozom. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. VII. c. xxix. The Prophet's tomb was ſhewn alſo at Gabata, about twelve miles from Eleutheropolis.

was

was the ſon of the Shunamite widow, whom Eliſha reſtored to life [H]; and the wretched biographers of the Prophets who write under the names of Epiphanius and Dorotheus relate, that on the approach of Nebuchadnezzar to Jeruſalem, the Prophet fled to Oſtracina, in the land of Iſmael, and there continued till after the retreat of the Chaldæans. But theſe writers appear, as does alſo St. Jerom, to have confounded the Prophet with the Habakkuk of the tribe of Levi mentioned by Daniel; who is deſcribed in the Greek title to Bel and the Dragon, as the author of that book; and who is therein related to have been ſnatched up at Jeruſalem by an angel, and conveyed to Babylon to furniſh food to Daniel in the lion's den; as alſo to have returned in the ſame miraculous manner. Habakkuk is ſaid likewiſe, upon no better authority, to have delivered many prophecies not contained in the book which we now poſſeſs; to have predicted the return of the Jews from captivity; the appearance of a great light (the Meſſiah) and God's glory in the temple; and the deſtruction of the temple by a nation from the Weſt (the Romans); as likewiſe to have compoſed the ſtory of Suſanna, and that of his own conveyance to Babylon.

THIS book, which was certainly compoſed by Habakkuk [I], opens with a pious exclamation, in

[H] 2 Kings iv. 16. The name of Habakkuk had ſome reſemblance with the words of Eliſha, who pronounced to the woman ("thou ſhalt embrace a ſon.")

[I] Chap. i. 1. ii. 1, 2.

which

which the Prophet expoſtulates with God in the bold terms that a zeal for his glory might ſuggeſt, on beholding the iniquities and lawleſs violence that prevailed among the Jews. The Almighty is repreſented as declaring that he would "work an incredible work in their days," that he would "raiſe up the Chaldæans," who are deſcribed by name; which nation though then poſſibly in alliance, if not in friendſhip with Judah [K], ſhould "march through the breadth of the land," and take poſſeſſion of its dwellings.

As Nahum had before predicted the fall of the Aſſyrians, who had carried the ten tribes into captivity: ſo Habakkuk, blending probably all the invaſions of the Chaldæans [L] under one conſideration, deſcribes in the moſt ſtriking manner, their victories, fierceneſs, and rapidity; and then, by a ſudden tranſition, contraſts the ſcene: and points out the puniſhment of the pride of the victors, and of their falſe confidence in their gods [M]; foreſhewing in expreſs terms, the change and infanity of Nebuchadnezzar [N]. The Prophet ſtill continues, with reverence for God's attributes, to plead the cauſe of his countrymen, as more righteous than thoſe whom

[K] 2 Kings xxiii. 29. and Prid. A. 610. Joſiah 31ſt.

[L] Chap. i. 5—10. The Chaldæans invaded Judæa three times in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar; firſt, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, A. M. 3307; ſecondly, in the reign of Jechoniah, A. M. 3405; and thirdly, in the ninth year of Zedekiah, A. M. 3414.

[M] Chap. ii. 4—12.

[N] Chap. i. 11.

God

God had "eſtabliſhed for correction," and to enquire why the Almighty ſhould ſuffer his people to be drawn up "like fiſhes," by a nation that attributed its ſucceſs to its own proweſs. He is then commanded to write, on durable tablets, and in legible characters, the viſion in which it is revealed to him firſt, that the general expectation on which the living faith of the juſt was built, ſhould ſurely come, though it muſt tarry the appointed time [o]; and, ſecondly, the deſtruction of that kingdom of Babylon which had "ſpoiled many nations;" and of thoſe evil Kings who gathered unto themſelves all people with inſatiable ambition, who ſhould find that graven images could not profit, but "the Lord" only "in his holy temple." The Prophet having heard the divine promiſes and threats in fearful re-

[o] Ch. ii. 3, 4. Rom. i. 17. Heb. x. 37, 38. The evangelical writer cites the paſſage according to the Septuagint, and the original will admit of the ſame conſtruction. Vid. Pearſon's Prolegomena to the Septuagint. Some Greek copies read εις καιρον μακρον, "for a long time:" the Vulgate has it, *adhuc viſus procul*, "the viſion is yet afar off." Biſhop Chandler is of opinion, that the third and fourth verſes of the ſecond chapter ſhould be thus tranſlated: "And at the end he ſhall break forth, and not deceive: though he tarry, expect him, becauſe he that cometh will come; he will not go beyond (God's appointed time.) Behold, if any man draw back, the ſoul of him (God) ſhall have no pleaſure in him; but the juſt ſhall live by faith." And the learned Biſhop juſtifies this tranſlation by a reference to the original, and to ſeveral verſions. Vid. Chandler's Defence, ch. ii. ſect. 1. p. 162, 163, notes A. The ſpiritual deliverance included alſo the temporal reſtoration from the captivity. The Talmudiſts apply the prophecy to the advent of the Meſſiah.

verence,

verence, concludes his work with an enraptured prayer: in which he ſupplicates God to haſten the deliverance of his people [P]. He commemorates in majeſtic language, the mercies which their forefathers had experienced from God when he delivered them out of Egypt, and conducted them through the wilderneſs: alluding to particular circumſtances with a deſultory and irregular deſcription, but with all the enthuſiaſm of inſpired piety; entering at once into the midſt of the ſubject: repreſenting God's deſcent from Teman [Q]; and now contemplating "the tents of Cuſhan [R] in affliction" and terror at the approach of the Iſraelites; he finiſhes, with a declaration of entire confidence in God, which no change of circumſtance ſhould ſhake.

[P] The ancient fathers explain this hymn as alluſive to the Meſſiah; and the Romiſh church has inſerted into its offices, ſome parts of it as applicable to Chriſt. Vid. Cyprian, cont. Jud. Lib. II. Euſeb. Præpar. Lib. VI. c. xv. Auguſt. de Trin. Lib. XVIII. Hieron. Theodoret Cyrill. &c. Office du Vendredi Saint, Antienne de Laudes, a la Meſſe.

[Q] Teman was a part of Seir, or Edom. Paran according to Ptolemy, was a diſtrict towards the extremity of the wilderneſs; a part of it was near Kadeſh. Vid. Numb. xiii. 26. and Patrick on Deut. xxxiii. 2.

[R] Cuſhan may mean Chus, or Midian, a part of Arabia Petræa, and of Arabia Felix. The Arabians were called Scenitæ, or dwellers in tents. The Midianites dwelt in part of Cuſh. The Prophet may allude to the circumſtances deſcribed in Exod. xv. 15. Numb. xxii. 3. or xxxi. 2—11. or poſſibly to ſome later victories. Vid. Judg. iii. 10. vii. 1, &c. Bochart. Geogr. Sac. 213.

It ſhould ſeem from the title [s] prefixed, and from the intimation ſubjoined to the laſt verſe of this prayer, as well as from the word Selah which occurs three times in the chapter, that the prayer was ſet to muſic; and perhaps performed in the ſervice of the temple; and it was poſſibly delivered in a kind of meaſure. The ſtile of the whole book is poetical; but more eſpecially this beautiful and perfect ode; which is decorated with every kind of imagery and poetical embelliſhment [t]. Habakkuk is imitated by ſucceeding Prophets, and is cited as an inſpired perſon by the evangelical writers [u].

[s] The meaning of the word Sigionoth is not known. Some ſuppoſe it to imply an inſtrument, ſome a tune. In the margin of our Bibles it is explained "according to the variable ſongs or tunes, called in Hebrew Shigionoth." The directions annexed to the end of the prayer might have been added by Joſiah, if the prayer was written in his reign. The meaning of the word Neginoth is uncertain. Vid. title to Pſalm iv.

[t] Lowth's Prælect. Poet. 21. and 28. and Green on ch. iii. 3—10.

[u] Heb. x. 37, 38. Rom. i. 17. Gal. iii. 11. Acts xiii. 41. comp. with Hab. i. 5. St. Luke cites this paſſage according to the Septuagint; and Pocock has ſhewn that the original will admit of the Apoſtle's conſtruction. Vid. Pocock in Porta Moſis, c. iii. He derives the word Bagojim, which we tranſlate, "among the heathen," from the word Baga, which ſtill ſignifies in the Arabic to be "proud or ſcornful;" and the word Tamah may be tranſlated, "wonder and periſh."

OF

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET ZEPHANIAH.

THE Prophet Zephaniah informs us that he was the ſon of Cuſhi; and that the word of the Lord came to him in the days of Joſiah King of Judah. He is ſuppoſed to have been of the tribe of Simeon; and as he traces back his pedigree for four generations [A], he was doubtleſs of noble birth [B]: though not of the royal family, as ſome have imagined [C] from the reſemblance between the names of Hezekiah and that of Hiſkia, from whom the Prophet profeſſes himſelf to have been a deſcendant; the period which intervened between king Hezekiah and the time in which Zephaniah flouriſhed, being ſcarce ſufficient to admit of three intermediate anceſtors to the Prophet.

[A] Some of the Jews fanſied that theſe anceſtors were all Prophets. Vid. Hieron. Com. in Sophon. init.

[B] Cyrill.

[C] R. Aben-Ezra.

ZEPHANIAH begins with denouncing God's wrath againſt "the remnant of Baal [D], and the name of the Chemarims [E]:" againſt them that worſhipped the hoſt of heaven, and ſwore by Malcham [F]; and therefore probably he addreſſed thoſe idolatrous prieſts who were not yet extirpated by the religious zeal of Joſiah [G]; he foretold, alſo, the deſtruction of Nineveh, which happened A. M. 3392. And upon theſe conſiderations he may be ſuppoſed to have

[D] Baal was anciently a name applied to the true God, and afterwards proſtituted to many Pagan deities. The Baal whoſe worſhip Jezabel introduced from Zidon, was, according to Mede, a deified King of the Phœnicians. The name was often given to the heavenly bodies when made the object of idolatrous worſhip. Vid. Selden. de Diis Syris Syntag. II. c. i. Mede, B. I. Diſc. 42.

[E] The word Chemarim is tranſlated idolatrous prieſts, 2 Kings xxiii. 5. They were called Chemarim becauſe clothed in black garments. Vid. Kimchi in loc. and in 2 Kings xxiii. 5. Black was the cuſtomary dreſs of idolatrous prieſts in many nations. Vid. Horace, Lib. I. Sat. VIII. l. 23, 24. Apoll. Rhod. Lib. III. l. 861. Plutarch de Iſid. Apuleius. l. 10. Miles. The black ox, that repreſented Oſiris among the Egyptians, was covered with a black ſilk or linen garment. Vid. Patrick in 2 Kings xxiii. 5.

[F] Malcham was the ſame deity with Moloch, a god of the Ammonites. Some ſuppoſe him the ſame with Baal, as both words ſignify dominion; but the name particularly means the ſun. He was worſhipped by heathens with human ſacrifices, and the Iſraelites dedicated their children to his ſervice by making them paſs through the fire. Vid. Voſſius de Orig. et Progreſ. Idolat. Lib. II. cap. v. Patrick in Levit. xviii. 21. and Calmet's Diſſ. ſur l'Idolat.

[G] Comp. Zeph. i. 4, 5—9. with 2 Kings xxiii. 5, 6, 12, &c.

propheſied

propheſied before the laſt reformation made by Joſiah, A. M. 3381. He may be conceived alſo to have entered on his office towards the commencement of the reign of that monarch, who aſcended the throne A. M. 3364, ſince he preceded Jeremiah, who began his prophetic miniſtry in the thirteenth year of Joſiah's reign. Epiphanius relates that Zephaniah was born at Mount Sarabatha, or Baratha [H].

ZEPHANIAH and Jeremiah reſemble each other ſo much in thoſe parts where they treat of the idolatries and wickedneſs that prevailed in their time, that St. Iſidore aſſerts, that Zephaniah was the abbreviator of Jeremiah; but he apparently propheſied before Jeremiah; and the latter ſeems to ſpeak of thoſe abuſes as partially removed, which the former deſcribes as preſent in the moſt flagitious extent [I].

ZEPHANIAH in this book appears to have conſpired with Joſiah in his righteous deſign of bringing back the people to the worſhip and obedience of the true God. His firſt chapter contains a general denunciation of vengeance againſt Judah, and thoſe

[H] Dorotheus calls the place Sabarthara. Sarathaſa is mentioned in Joſhua, as a mountainous place in the territory of Reuben. Zeredatha, or Sarthas, is ſpoken of in 2 Chron. iv. 17. The place of Zephaniah's nativity might be Saraa, near Eſhthaol, in the tribe of Simeon, with the addition of Beth, or Batha, which ſignifies an houſe or place of reſidence.

[I] Comp. Zephan. i. 4, 5, 9. with Jerem. ii. 5, 20, 32.

who ſuperſtitiouſly obſerved the rites [K] of idolaters, or violently invaded the property of others; and he declares that "the great day of trouble and diſtreſs, of deſolation and darkneſs," was at hand. In the ſecond chapter, the Prophet predicts woe to the Cherethites [L]; the Moabites; Ammonites; and Æthiopians [M]; and deſcribes the deſolation of Nineveh, in terms wonderfully deſcriptive [N]. Theſe prophecies were chiefly accompliſhed by the conqueſts of Nebuchadnezzar [O]. In the third chapter, the Prophet returns to Jeruſalem, arraigns her pollutions, oppreſſions, and corruption, which ſhould be puniſhed in God's general vengeance; and con-

[K] Chap. i. 9. The Chaldee Paraphraſt applies this verſe to thoſe who lived after the rules of the Philiſtines. Vid. Bochart. Hierozoic. Lib. II. ch. xxxvi. If a ſuperſtitious practice be alluded to, it might be derived from the blind prejudice of the Philiſtines. Vid. 1 Sam. v. 1—5. Traces of a ſimilar obſervance may be found among other nations. Vid. Juven. Sat. VI. l. 47. Tibul. Lib. I. Eleg. II. l. 89, 90. Lucan. Lib. II. l. 359.

[L] The Cherethites, or Cherethims, were the Philiſtines who bordered on the Mediterranean, called Cherethims. Ezek. xxv. 16. and Κρῆτες, Cretans, in the Septuagint. They are ſuppoſed to have been a colony removed from Crete to Paleſtine. Vid. Lowth and Calmet.

[M] Chap. ii. 12. comp. with Jerem. xlvi. 2, 9. Ezek. xxx. 4—10. Joſeph. Ant. Lib. X. c. xi.

[N] Chap. ii. 14, 15. Some have, without ſufficient reaſon, ſuppoſed that this prophecy is an interpolation from Jonah; and that it is alluded to in Tobit xiv. 4, 8. Vid. Whiſton's Authentic Records, vol. ii. Append. IV.

[O] Prid. Con. in 21, 31, and 32, of Nebuchadnezzar.

cludes,

cludes, as is uſual with the Prophets, with promiſes of a remnant who ſhould truſt in the Lord's name; of a return to his favour; and of bleſſings partly completed by the Goſpel diſpenſations, but finally to be accompliſhed in the general reſtoration of the Jews [P]. In the ſecond and third chapters, likewiſe, the Prophet magnifies his expreſſions in ſpeaking of temporal events to an importance which accords only with the effects produced by the preaching of the Goſpel: in the deſtruction of idolatry, and in the calling of the Gentiles to God's ſervice [Q]. The ſtile of Zephaniah is poetical; but it is not diſtinguiſhed by any peculiar elegance or beauty, though generally animated and impreſſive.

[P] Chap. iii. 8—20. [Q] Chap. ii. 11. & ch. iii.

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET HAGGAI.

HAGGAI is generally reputed to have been born in the captivity, and to have returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel [A]. He is reckoned as the tenth in order among the Prophets, both in the Hebrew and Greek copies; and may be conſidered as the firſt of the three Prophets who flouriſhed among the Jews after their return to their country. He appears to have been raiſed up by God to exhort Zerubbabel [B], and Joſhua the high-prieſt, the ſon of Joſedech, to reſume the work of the temple: which had been interrupted near fourteen years, in conſequence of the intrigues of the Samaritans, and other obſtructions excited to defeat the edict of Cyrus [C]. He began to propheſy in the ſecond year of Darius Hyſtaſpes, A. M. 3484, about

[A] Ezra ii. 2. Cyrill. Lib. I. Adv. Julian. Epiphan. & Doroth.

[B] Ezra v. 1.

[C] Ezra iv. 24.

fifteen

fifteen years after the foundation of the temple had been laid [D]. The Prophets, after the captivity, ſometimes reckon by the dates of thoſe ſovereigns to whom their country was ſubjected.

HAGGAI begins with repreſenting to the people who delayed by evaſive procraſtinations the work of the temple, that they were more ſolicitous to build and to adorn their own houſes, than to labour in the ſervice of God; and informs them, that the ſcarcity and unfruitful ſeaſons which they experienced, were deſigned as a puniſhment for their ſelfiſh diſregard to the glory of the Lord. His earneſt remonſtrance and exhortations appear to have produced their effect; and the Prophet in order to encourage thoſe who fondly remembering the magnificence of that glorious ſtructure which had been reared by Solomon, and who, perhaps, impreſſed with the deſcription furniſhed by Ezekiel [E], muſt have lamented

[D] Ezra v. 1. The Darius of Haggai and Zechariah could not have been Darius Nothus, who did not begin to reign till above 100 years after the decree of Cyrus, and before whoſe time Zerubbabel and Joſhua muſt have been dead, as well as all thoſe who remembered the temple in its firſt glory. But as the ſecond year of Darius Hyſtaſpes correſponds with the ſeventeenth year after the return from the captivity, many might have at that time been living who remembered Solomon's temple which was deſtroyed only ſixty-eight years before; and we may allow the temple to have been rebuilt in about twenty years. Vid. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XI. c. iv. Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. I. Witſius Miſcel. Sac. Lib. I. c. xx. Dr. Allix, with leſs reaſon, contends for Darius Ochus.

[E] Ezek. xl.—xlviii.

the comparative meanneſs of the preſent building: declares to them in the name of the Lord, that the glory of this latter houſe, though it might appear as nothing in their eyes, yet ſhould be greater than that of the former; "for thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, yet once it is a little while, and I will ſhake the heavens, and the earth, and the ſea, and the dry land: and I will ſhake all nations, and the deſire of all nations ſhall come; and I will fill this houſe with glory, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts [F], with a greater glory," with a glory more apparent and manifeſt than was that clouded and ſymbolical repreſentation of the divine Majeſty which overſhadowed the mercy-ſeat in the old temple; and which prefigured only that incarnate preſence of the Meſſiah in whom ſhould "dwell all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily [G];" that from this temple, though not decorated with ſilver and with gold, yet there ſhould appear the Prince "of Peace [H]." Haggai, after again reca-

[F] Chap. ii. 6, 7. comp. with Heb. xii. 26.

[G] Coloſſ. ii. 9.

[H] Chap. ii. 6—9. comp. with Epheſ. ii. 14. and Heb. xii. 26, 27. Some writers would reſtrict this magnificent prophecy to an aſſurance of the riches and ſplendor of the ſecond temple, maintaining that חמדת, as the nominative caſe to a plural verb, ought to be tranſlated *deſirable things*. But *things* could not with any propriety of ſpeech be ſaid "to come;" and the Hebrew language admits of a plural ſubſtantive for the expreſſion of dignity (as even in the ſame word in Dan. ix. 23.) It is not clear, indeed, that the word is plural, for the vau, which conſtitutes the plural termination of ובאו, might perhaps belong to the next word, and ſignify *he*; and the Chaldee and

recapitulating the offences that had excited God's anger, and which could not be atoned for till the people ſhould have repented of their neglect of God's ſervice; and after conſoling them with a promiſe of future bleſſings, concludes his ſplendid prophecies, which he was enabled to deliver by four diſtinct revelations [I], with predicting the important revolutions that ſhould precede the great and final advent of our Lord [K], typically deſcribed under the name of Zerubbabel: when the kingdoms of the world ſhould become the kingdoms of the Lord, and his Chriſt [L]: a conſummation foreſhadowed, perhaps, in the temporal commotions which happened before the firſt advent of our Saviour [M].

THESE ſignal predictions which obtained to Haggai the character of a Prophet [N], were ſuppoſed

and Vulgate render the word in the ſingular number. Certain it is, that neither Zerubbabel's, nor Herod's temple, did ever equal that of Solomon in magnificence; and the ſolemnity with which this prophecy is introduced, as well as the grandeur of its deſcription, are hyperbolical in the extreme, unleſs applied to the glorious preſence of the Meſſiah. Vid. parallel Text in Malac. iii. 1. Chandler's Defen. ſect. 1. ch. ii. Newcome, &c.

[I] They are preciſely marked out. Vid. ch. i. 1. ii. 1, 10, 20.

[K] Chap. ii. 22, 23.

[L] Dan. ii. 44. and Rev. xi. 15.

[M] As the Babylonian commotions under Darius; the Macedonian wars, and thoſe between the ſucceſſors of Alexander, or the diſturbances in the Roman empire, which ſucceeded the death of Cæſar. Vid. Oroſius, Lib. VII. c. xxii., &c.

[N] Ezra v. 1. vi. 14. Heb. xii. 26.

by

by the Jews to refer to the time of the Meſſiah [o]. Some modern objections have, indeed, been made to the exact accompliſhment of that prophecy which has been applied to Chriſt: on a pretence that the temple in which our Saviour appeared, was not in reality a ſecond, but a third temple, rebuilt by Herod; but it is certain, that whatever alterations and additions were made by Herod to Zerubbabel's temple, yet it did not conſtitute an entirely new building [p]; and as Herod's ſtructure was a gradual work of forty-ſix years, no nominal diſtinction was ever made between the two [q]; both being conſidered in popular language, as the ſecond temple; and had the Prophet adopted ſuch diſtinction, it muſt have led the Jews to expect a demolition of the temple, inſtead of ſerving to conſole them. It is likewiſe undeniable, that the Jews did, in conſequence of this prophecy, expect the Meſſiah to appear in this temple [r], till after its deſtruction by Veſpaſian; they then applied it to a third, which they expect at ſome future period.

THE ſtile of Haggai is repreſented by the learned Lowth as entirely proſaic [s]; but Biſhop Newcome

[o] Aben-Ezra ap Degling. Obſer. Sac. Par. III. Obſerv. 29.

[p] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XV. c. xv.

[q] Joſeph. de Bel. Jud. Lib. VIII. c. xviii. Prid. Con. An. A. C. 534.

[r] Talm. Sanh. c. x. ſect. 30. Maimon. in Sanh. Midr. on Deut. xxxiii. 12. Ber. Ketan. on Gen. i. Par. II. Ber. Rab on Gen. xxvii. 27. Talm. Hier. tr. Beracoth in Lightf. R. Sal. Jarchi. Book Caphtor, quoted by Grotius de Verit. L. V.

[s] Prælect. Poet. 21.

has

has given a tranſlation of it on an idea that a great part of it admits of a metrical diviſion [T]. Haggai, according to ſome traditionary accounts, muſt have been converſant with metrical compoſitions. In ſome manuſcripts of the Septuagint, Vulgate, and other verſions of the Pſalter, titles are prefixed to the cxxxviiith, cxlvith, cxlviith, and cxlviiith Pſalms [U], by which they are aſcribed to Haggai and Zechariah. But as theſe titles are not in the Hebrew copies, and as the dates and occaſion of theſe ſeveral Pſalms are in ſome meaſure uncertain, we can place but little confidence on theſe inſcriptions. It is, however, very probable, that theſe Prophets were concerned in the compoſition of ſome of theſe hymns, which were produced after the return from the captivity. Haggai was probably of the ſacerdotal race; and Epiphanius relates, that he was buried among the Prieſts at Jeruſalem. He and Zachariah are ſaid to have been the firſt who ſung the Hallelujah in the temple. The Rabbins report, that they were both of the great ſynagogue [X], which they ſuppoſe to have had its origin in the time of Darius Hyſtaſpes.

[T] Newcome's attempt towards an improved verſion of the Twelve Minor Prophets.

[U] Prol. in Bib. Max.

[X] For this reaſon Iſaac Abarbinel excludes them, as well as Malachi, from the rank of Prophets, though their books were admitted into the canon, and they were conſidered as Prophets by the Jews, and the ſynagogue was allowed to contain ſome perſons intitled to the rank of Prophets. Vid. Maimon. More Nevoch, Par. I. c. lix. Vid. Auctor. Beth Iſrael, ad Bava Bathra, c. i.

OF

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET ZECHARIAH.

ZECHARIAH was the ſon of Barachiah, and the grandſon of Iddo [A]: the laſt of whom is ſuppoſed to have been a different perſon from the Iddo mentioned by Nehemiah as one of the prieſts that returned from Babylon under the conduct of Zerubbabel [B]; but it is very poſſible that Zechariah might have been of the ſacerdotal race; and

[A] Chap. i. 1. Ezra v. 1. vi. 14. where ſon is put for deſcendant, as is uſual in ſcripture. Vid. Dan. v. 2. Matt. i. 1.

[B] Nehem. xii. 4. St. Jerom ſays, that it was not doubted that Iddo was the ſame perſon with the man of God who was ſent to Jeroboam. Vid. 1 Kings xiii. 1, 2. 2 Chron. xii. 15. but this was probably an error. It is certain, at leaſt, that Zechariah could not be the grandſon of a man who lived above 400 years before he began to propheſy. It is doubtful whether Iddo, the anceſtor of Zechariah, is deſcribed in this book as a Prophet, for that title is ambiguouſly placed in chap. i. 1. The Septuagint and Vulgate apply the title to Zechariah. Ζαχαριαν τον τε Βαραχιε, υιον Αδδω, τον Προφητην.

when releaſed by the decree of Cyrus from the captivity, in which he probably was born, have been accompanied by his grandfather in the general reſtoration. No certain information can be collected concerning the time or place in which Zechariah was born. Some writers relate that he was of the tribe of Levi, and conſecrated to the prieſtly office [c]; and we are told that his body was found with a ſacerdotal white robe at Caphar, or Capher [d], at the extremity of the territory of Eleutheropolis; while by others we are informed that he was buried at Betharia, in the land of Noeman, about forty furlongs from Eleutheropolis [e]; not to mention that according to other accounts his remains were depoſited near thoſe of Haggai at Jeruſalem [f], and that his pretended tomb is ſtill ſhewn at the foot of Mount Olivet.

But little reliance can be placed on theſe and ſimilar repreſentations, ſome, or indeed all of which,

[c] Cyrill. Præf. in Com. in Zechar. Epiph. Doroth, &c.

[d] Sozomen, who relates an idle tale concerning the miraculous diſcovery of Zechariah's body, in a perfect ſtate, at Caphar, adds to the account, that an infant was found under the Prophet's feet, buried with the ornaments of royalty; and that about the ſame time an apocryphal book was alſo found, in which it was written, that the favourite ſon of Joaſh died ſuddenly on the ſeventh day after that monarch had ſlain Zechariah, and that Joaſh conſidering it as a judgment, ordered that his ſon's body ſhould be buried with that of the Prophet. Sozomen. Lib. IX. c. ult. Niceph. Lib. XIV. c. viii.

[e] Dorotheus.

[f] Epiphanius.

have

have confounded the Prophet with other perſons mentioned in the ſcriptures. Sozomen imagined that the Prophet was the ſame perſon with Zechariah the ſon of Jeberechiah, the witneſs mentioned by Iſaiah [G], and who appears to have lived in the time of Ahaz, about A. M. 3262. Others by a great anachroniſm, make him coeval with Joaſh [H], or Uzziah [I].

THE author of the preſent work [K] was unqueſtionably a contemporary with Haggai; and began to propheſy two months after him, in the eighth month of the ſecond year of Darius Hyſtaſpes, A. M. 3484; being commiſſioned as well as Haggai, to exhort the Jews to proceed in the building of the temple, after the interruption which the work had ſuffered. We are informed by Ezra, that the Jews "proſpered through the propheſying [L]," and obeyed the inſtructions of Zechariah, who continued to propheſy above two years; the laſt revelation of which the date is ſpecified in this book, having been delivered in the fourth day of the ninth month of the fourth year of Darius Hyſtaſpes [M]; Zechariah therefore probably lived to witneſs the completion of the temple, which was finiſhed in about ſix years; and hav-

[G] Iſaiah viii. 2.

[H] 2 Chron. xxiv. 21. Epiphan. &c.

[I] 2 Chron. xxvi. 5.

[K] Chap. i. 1. Ezra v. 1. vi. 14. Haggai i. 1.

[L] Ezra vi. 14.

[M] Chap. vii. 1. The month Chiſleu correſponds with part of our November and December.

ing

ing contributed either as a prieſt, or a member of the great ſynagogue, as well as a Prophet, to promote the welfare and intereſts of his country, died in peace, being probably a different perſon from the Zachariah mentioned by Chriſt [N].

ZECHARIAH, who certainly collected his own prophecies into their preſent form [O], is mentioned as a Prophet by Ezra [P]; and is cited as an inſpired writer by the ſacred penmen of the New Teſtament [Q]. The minute accompliſhment of his own il-

[N] Our Saviour, vid. Matt. xxiii. 35. imputes to the Jews the blood of Zacharias, the ſon of Barachias; accuſing them of having ſlain him between the temple and the altar. By this martyr, however, was probably meant Zecharias, the ſon of Jehoiada, who is related in 2 Chron. xxiv. 21. to have been ſlain by command of Joaſh in the court of the Lord's houſe, (which might be between the temple and the altar) for it is not conceivable that both Zachariah and Zechariah were ſlain in the ſame manner. It is probable, therefore, that the copyiſts of St. Matthew inſerted Barachiah, (perhaps firſt in the margin) thinking that it muſt have been the Prophet whoſe writings were extant. And this is confirmed, if we conſider that Barachiah is not mentioned in the parallel paſſage of St. Luke. Vid. chap. xi. 5. And St. Jerom aſſures us, that in a manuſcript copy of the Goſpel of St. Matthew, uſed by the Nazarenes, which he obtained permiſſion from the inhabitants of Beræa in Syria, to copy, it was written, the ſon of Jehoiada. Vid. Hieron. in Matt. xxiii. & de Script. Eccleſ. Joſephus relates, that Zachariah, the ſon of Baruch, was ſlain in the temple, but he certainly means the contemporary of Joaſh. Vid. de Bell. Jud. L. IV.

[O] Chap. i. 9. ii. 2.

[P] Ezra v. 1. vi. 14.

[Q] Matt. xxi. 4, 5. xxvi. 31. xxvii. 9. Mark xiv. 27. John xiv. 15. xix. 37. Epheſ. iv. 25. Rev. i. 7. and the marginal references in our Bible.

luſtrious

luſtrious prophecies bears a ſignal teſtimony to the truth of that infallible ſpirit by which he was inſpired. He was ſo diſtinguiſhed for the peculiar excellency of his predictions, as to be ſtiled the ſun among the leſſer Prophets. It is, however, the ſun ſometimes clouded by obſcurity. The ænigmatical caſt of his viſions, which are of difficult interpretation, muſt, indeed, be ſuppoſed neceſſarily to produce ſome ſhades. The general deſign of the work, however, is ſufficiently obvious; and it is occaſionally illuminated with the brighteſt and moſt ſtriking paſſages.

The Prophet, in conformity with his firſt intention, begins with general exhortations to his countrymen: exciting them to repent from the evil ways of their fathers, to whom the Prophets had vainly addreſſed their cry; deſcribes, as an intereſting repreſentation which he had beheld in viſion, angels of the Lord miniſtering to his will, and interceding for mercy on Jeruſalem, and the deſolate cities of Judæa, which had experienced God's indignation ſeventy years [R]: while other nations connected with Judah were in peace. He announces God's diſpleaſure againſt the heathens who "had helped

[R] Chap. i. 12. Zechariah reckons theſe ſeventy years from the beſieging of Jeruſalem in the ninth year of the reign of Zedekiah, and the tenth month, for which a ſolemn faſt was kept by the Jews. Comp. 2 Kings xxv. 1. with Zech. viii. 19. this ends in the ſecond year of Darius. If we reckon from the deſtruction of Jeruſalem in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the ſeventy years will be completed in the fourth year of Darius. Vid. Zech. vii. 1, 5. Prid. An. A. C. 518.

forward

forward the affliction" of the Jews, by endeavours to impede the building of the temple; and declares, that the houſe of the Lord ſhould be built in Jeruſalem, and Zion be comforted [s]. The Prophet then proceeds figuratively to repreſent the increaſe and proſperity of the Jews [t]; promiſing that God ſhould be unto them "a wall of fire;" that he ſhould dwell in the midſt of them, and the nations to be converted to his ſervice [u]; that the high-prieſt ſhould be reſtored with his former ſplendor in the perſon of Joſhua, who is declared to be the type [x] of that ſpiritual ſervant of the Lord who ſhould be called "the branch [y]:" become the chief corner-ſtone of his church, and remove the iniquity of the land, and the ſucceſs of whoſe government is foreſhewn under the promiſed completion of Zerub-

[s] Chap. i. 16, 17.

[t] Chap. ii. 4. comp. with Joſeph. B. Jud. V. 4. 2. Vitringa, &c.

[u] Chap. ii. 10—13.

[x] Chap. iii. 8. The word Mophet ſignifies a wonder, or a type. Vid. Iſa. xx. 3. Ezek. xii. 7. xxiv. 24. Chand. Def. ch. iii. ſect. 1, 4.

[y] Chap. iii. 8, 9. A title of the Meſſiah, as deſcending from the ſtock of David. Vid. Iſa. iv. 2. Jerem. xxiii. 5. The Chaldee Paraphraſt applies theſe texts to Chriſt, who is eminently called God's ſervant. Vid. Iſa. xli. 1. xlix. 3. lii. 13. liii. 11. Ezek. xxxiv. 23. The Seventy tranſlate the word Tſemach here and elſewhere, Ανατολη, the Eaſt, or ſun-riſing, thence applied to Chriſt. Luke i. 78. and tranſlated "the day-ſpring." Hence, perhaps, the Jewiſh prophecy mentioned by Tacitus, (ut valeſceret Oriens.) Vid. Tacit. Hiſt. Lib. V. c. xiii. Grot. in loc. & ad Agg. ii. 8.

babel's deſigns [z]. The Prophet then interweaves in his diſcourſe ſome inſtructive admonitions: unfolding the ample roll of God's judgment againſt theft and perjury, and ſuch other prevailing wickedneſs [a], as had provoked God's former vengeance. He emblematically pourtrays the four ſucceſſive empires that had been, or ſhould be employed as miniſters of wrath [b]; and is empowered to foretel the eſtabliſhment of the Jewiſh government; and to crown the repreſentative of Chriſt, who ſhould be both King and Prieſt, with the emblems of civil and religious authority united [c].

To the captives from Babylon, or other profeſſors of the Hebrew religion [d], who phariſaically obſerved ſolemn faſts without true contrition, the Prophet recommends judgment, mercy, and compaſſion [e]; and then addreſſing himſelf to the Jews, he promiſes a return of righteouſneſs and favour to Jeruſalem: aſſuring them, that the mournful faſts with

[z] Chap. iv. 9, 10.

[a] Chap. v. and Deut. xxvii. xxviii.

[b] Chap. vi. The chariots and horſes probably repreſent the Babylonian, Perſian, Macedonian, and Roman empires. The two brazen mountains may ſignify God's immoveable decrees. Vid. Pſa. xxxvi. 6.

[c] Chap. vi. 10—15.

[d] Some have ſuppoſed that they who ſent to pray before the Lord, vid. ch. vii. 2. were Perſian officers of Darius. Theodoret imagines, that they were Cutheans, or Samaritans. Others, that they were diſtant inhabitants of Judæa; but probably they were Jewiſh captives from Babylon. Vid. Calmet and other Commentators.

[e] Chap. vii. 9, 10.

which

which they lamented its deſtruction, ſhould be converted into cheerful feaſts; and that the church of the Lord ſhould be enlarged by the acceſſion of many nations converted by means of the Jews [F].

The twelfth verſe of the eleventh chapter of this book, which exhibits a prophetic deſcription of ſome circumſtances afterwards fulfilled in our Saviour, appears to be cited by St. Matthew as ſpoken by Jeremy [G]; and as this and the two preceding chapters, which are connected by a kind of continuation, have been thought to contain ſome particulars more ſuitable to the period of Jeremiah, than to that of Zechariah, or to the deſign of his appointment [H]:

[F] Chap. viii.

[G] Matt. xxvii. 9, 10.

[H] Mede is of opinion, that the deſcription of Tyre, in chap. ix. 3. was not applicable to her condition after the deſtruction effected by Nebuchadnezzar; but new Tyre might be riſing into proſperity in the time of Zechariah. The prophecies in the ninth chapter againſt Damaſcus and the Philiſtines, and eſpecially againſt Aſkelon, have been judged more deſcriptive of the deſolation produced by Nebuchadnezzar, than of the circumſtances which reſulted from the victories of Alexander. It may be obſerved, likewiſe, that Aſſyria is threatened in chap. x. 11. though that empire was deſtroyed before the time of Zechariah. Aſſyria, however, may be put for Syria, or the enemies of God in general. Some, alſo, apply the paſſage in chap. xi. 1—6. at leaſt in the firſt inſtance, to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem produced by the Babylonians; though, perhaps, it may refer only to thoſe calamitous circumſtances which occurred ſubſequently to the time of Zechariah, as under Antiochus or Veſpaſian. Vid. 1 Macc. i. Joſeph. de Bell. Jud.

ſome learned writers have conceived [I], that they were written by the former Prophet; that they differ in ſtile from the eight firſt chapters [K], and have been accidentally tranſpoſed, or joined to thoſe of Zechariah, from ſimilarity of ſubject. Other writers are, however, of opinion, that St. Matthew in the place referred to, might allude to ſome traditional prophecy of Jeremiah; or that the name of Jeremy was improperly added or ſubſtituted by a miſtake of the copyiſt of the Goſpel for that of Zechariah [L]; and theſe writers maintain, that the chapters concerned in this enquiry admit of a conſtruction perfectly conſiſtent with the time of Zechariah; that Zechariah in them deſcribes the conqueſt of Damaſcus, Tyre, and Sidon, and of the cities of the Philiſtines, as effected by Alexander [M]; the victories of the Maccabees over the troops of Antiochus, who was of Grecian deſcent; with future ſucceſſes to be obtained by converſion to the true God, and deliverances ſimilar to thoſe from Egypt and Aſſyria [N];

[I] Hammond in Matt. xxvii. Mede, Book IV. Epiſt. 31, & 60. Kidder. Demonſt. Part II. c. iii. Randolph's Texts cited in N. T. n. 28.

[K] Lowth's Prælect. Poet. 21.

[L] Matt. xxvii. 9. One MS. the Syriac and Perſic verſions, & God. Verc. & Veron. in Blanchini Evan. quad. read διὰ τοῦ προφήτου, without any name, as do ſome of the fathers. St. Jerom profeſſes to have ſeen a book attributed to Jeremiah, in which the prophetic paſſage was contained.

[M] Chap. ix. 1—16.

[N] Chap ix. 13. x. 10—11.

that

that Zechariah then angry at the little effect produced by his endeavours, denounces the future deſtruction of Jeruſalem, its temple [o], and lofty houſes; and repreſents himſelf as breaking in viſion the ſymbolical badges of his paſtoral office, and as aſſuming "the inſtruments of a fooliſh ſhepherd," to foreſhew the cruelties which ſhould be exerciſed by wicked rulers [p]; interſperſed with, and adumbrated by which temporal promiſes and threats, are prophecies of Chriſt; who is ſpoken of in the moſt ſtriking manner, as with reſpect to his lowly entrance to Jeruſalem "upon an aſs, and upon a colt the foſe of an aſs [q];" and his being valued at thirty pieces of ſilver, which is typically foreſhewn in a viſionary repreſentation [r].

[o] Chap. xi. 1—3. Lebanon is ſuppoſed to mean the temple with its cedar buildings. The Jewiſh writers relate, that before the deſtruction of the temple, the doors, though barred with iron, opened of their own accord. Vid. Joſeph. de Bel. Jud. Lib. VII. c. xii. when R. Johanan, a diſciple of R. Hillel, directing his ſpeech to the temple, ſaid, "I know thy deſtruction is at hand, according to the prophecy of Zechariah," (open thy doors, O Lebanon.) And Tacitus gives the ſame account of the opening of the doors. Vid. Hiſt. Lib. V.

[p] Chap. xi. 15—17. Baſnage's Hiſt. of the Jews, Book VII. Prid. Con. Par. I. B. iii. Anno 11. Ptolemy Philometor.

[q] Chap. ix. 9. comp. with Matt. xxi. 2—9. where the Evangeliſt, perhaps, refers likewiſe to Iſaiah lxii. 11. Vid. alſo, John xii. 14, 15. who cites the ſenſe rather than the words of the Prophet.

[r] Chap. xi. 12, 13. comp. with Matt. xxvi. 15. xxvii. 3—10.

WHATEVER may be determined as to theſe three chapters, there is no ſufficient reaſon to ſuppoſe, with ſome commentators, that the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth chapters alſo, which conſtitute a diſtinct prophecy, were written before the time of Zechariah; ſince they contain nothing incompatible with the period of that Prophet [s]. But at whatever time they were written, they were unqueſtionably the production of an inſpired writer, ſince they are cited as ſuch in the New Teſtament [t]. They contain prophecies which refer entirely to the circumſtances of the chriſtian diſpenſation. They begin with the aſſurance of ſome final victories to be obtained over the enemies of Jeruſalem [u]; they deſcribe the reſtoration of the Jews, their converſion and bitter compunction for having pierced the Meſ-

[s] It has been ſuppoſed that the Prophet in chap. xii. 11. alludes to the mourning made for Joſiah, who was ſlain at Megiddo. Vid. 2 Kings xxiii. 29. 2 Chron. xxxv. 22—25. But Zechariah might ſpeak of this mourning as proverbially ſorrowful, though it happened before his time. Some alſo have imagined, that the prediction in chap. xiii. 2—6. was uttered before the captivity, though the abuſes of which the final extirpation is there foretold, were not ſo totally ſuppreſſed as to be unknown after the return from Babylon. The Prophets likewiſe, in general, in their deſcriptions of the final reformation to be produced in the church, foretel the utter deſtruction of idolatry. Vid. Iſaiah ii. 18. xxx. 22. xxxi. 7. Hoſea ii. 17. Micah v. 13.

[t] John xix. 37. Matt. xxi. 4, 5. xxvi. 31.

[u] Chap. xii. 1—9. comp. with Ezek. xxxvii. xxxix. and Rev. xx. 9.

ſiah;

ſiah [x]; their admiſſion by baptiſm to the privileges of the Goſpel covenant [y]; and their deliverance from the deluſions of falſe prophets. The Prophet then reverts to foreſhew the diſperſion of Chriſt's diſciples [z], and the preſervation of a ſmall remainder of his converts, whoſe faith ſhould be tried in affliction. In the laſt chapter he repreſents the deſtruction of Jeruſalem by the Romans [a]; the ſubſequent diſcomfiture of its enemies [b]; and the final and triumphant eſtabliſhment of Chriſt's righteous kingdom, who ſhould be King over the whole earth [c]. The Prophet deſcribes theſe particulars with a clearneſs which indicated the near approach of the events of which he ſpeaks.

The ſtile of Zechariah is ſo remarkably ſimilar to that of Jeremiah, that the Jews were accuſtomed to obſerve that the ſpirit of Jeremiah had paſſed into him. He is generally proſaic till towards the concluſion of his work, when he becomes more elevated and poetical. The whole work is beautifully connected by eaſy tranſitions, and preſent and future ſcenes are blended with the moſt delicate contexture. Epiphanius attributes ſome predictions to Zechariah,

[x] Chap. xii. 10.

[y] Chap. xiii. 1.

[z] Chap. xiii. 7. comp. with Matt. xxvi. 31. and Mark xiv. 27.

[a] Chap. xiv. 1, 2. that by Veſpaſian. Vid. Euſeb. Demonſt. Lib. VI.

[b] Chap. xiv. 3.

[c] Chap. xiv. 8. and following verſe.

which were delivered according to his account by the Prophet at Babylon, and on the journey in his return from thence; but theſe are not extant in ſcripture, and are of very queſtionable authority. The Zechariah to whom an apocryphal book is attributed by ſome writers, is ſuppoſed to have been a different perſon from the Prophet, and according to Fabricius, he was the father of John the Baptiſt [D].

[D] Athan. Synop. Fabric. Pſeudep. Script. vol. i.

OF

OF THE

BOOK OF THE PROPHET MALACHI.

MALACHI was the laſt of thoſe Prophets who flouriſhed before the Goſpel diſpenſation. Some writers ſtrangely imagined that Malachi was merely a general name, ſignifying the angel of the Lord; a meſſenger, or Prophet, becauſe the title of Malach-Jehovah, or meſſenger of the Lord, was often applied to the Prophets [A]. The Septuagint verſion has rendered מלאכי, Malachi, his angel; and ſeveral of the fathers have quoted Malachi, under the title of the angel of the Lord; and hence ſome have conceited that he was an angel incarnate, and not a man [B]. Others have ſuppoſed that under the ap-

[A] Iſai. xliv. 26. Haggai i. 13. Maimon. More Nevoch, Par. II. c. xli. "Propheta non raro vocatur Angelus."

[B] Origen. tom. ii. in Joan Hieron. in Agg. Præf. in Malach. & Epiſt. ad Evagrium. Tertull. cont. Judæ. The ſame idea prevailed concerning Haggai; the Baptiſt, &c.

pellative

pellative name of Malachi, was intended Ezra [c]; and have maintained that Malachi is not mentioned among the Prophets in the book of Eccleſiaſticus. But it is very certain, that Malachi was a different perſon from Ezra. His work had a diſtinct place in the Hebrew canon; and in fact he is as much noticed by the author of Eccleſiaſticus, as any of the other minor Prophets: all of whom are celebrated under one collective memorial [d]. The names of the Prophets are very often expreſſive of their office; and that of Malachi was probably aſſumed as deſcriptive of his character [e], as he was eminently diſtinguiſhed for the virtues of his mind, and for the graces of his exterior form; it being unqueſtionably the appropriate name of an human Prophet.

Malachi is repreſented by ſome traditionary accounts, to have been of the tribe of Zabulon, and a native of Sapha [f]; to have died young, and to have been buried with his anceſtors at Sapha: after having aſſiſted as a member of the great Synagogue in the re-eſtabliſhment of order and proſperity in his country. Uſher conceives him to have flouriſhed about A. M. 3588, which is about twenty years

[c] Abrah. Zacut. in Juchaſin, David Ganz, Chald. Parap. in Malach. Buxtorf. Tiberiad. c. iii. Hieron. Præf. in Malach. Iſidor. &c.

[d] Eccluſ xlix. 10.

[e] Some inventive writers abſurdly ſay, that an angel viſibly appeared to confirm immediately what the Prophet uttered. Vid. Epiph. Doroth. & Chron. Alex.

[f] Or Sopha, or Supha, or Socha. Vid. Epiphan. Doroth, &c.

later

later than the period assigned to him by Blair [G]. But as it appears from the consent of all Jewish and Christian antiquity, that the light of prophecy expired in Malachi [H], we may suppose that the termination of his ministry coincided with the accomplishment of the first seven weeks of Daniel's prophecy, which was the period allotted for "sealing the vision and prophecy [I]." This, according to Prideaux's account, must be assigned to A. M. 3595, but according to the calculations of Bishop Lloyd, to A. M. 3607, twelve years later [K]; whichever reckoning we may prefer, Malachi must be admitted to have completed the canon of the Old Testament, about four hundred years before the birth of Christ; when the great designs of Providence were completed in the termination of the prophetic ministry;

[G] St. Jerom makes Malachi contemporary with Darius Hystaspes. Vid. Hieron. Præf. in 12 Proph. & Procem. in Mal. Euseb. Chron. Lib. II. Theodor. Procem. in 12 Proph. But if we admit Blair's account, which gives Malachi the highest antiquity, he must rather have been contemporary with Artaxerxes Longimanus, or Darius Nothus. Vid. August. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxvi. Clem. Alex. Strom. I. Cyrill. Præf. in Malach.

[H] Abraham Zacutus in Juchasin. David Ganz in Zemach David. Seder Olam Zuta. Maimon. Massec. Sotah c. ult. Edict. Bartiner. Gem. Sanhed. c. i. § 13. Cosri Maam, 3. § 39. R. Tanchum. 1 Macc. iv. 46. ix. 27. Clemens Alex. Strom. Lib. I. Justin Martyr entertained a false notion that the spirit of prophecy did not cease till the Christian æra. Smith on Prophecy, ch. xii.

[I] Dan. ix. 24.

[K] Preface to Nehemiah, p. 220, note 1.

and

and when a ſcheme of prophecy was unfolded which in its entire contexture was to be accommodated to, and to characterize the Meſſiah.

MALACHI certainly prophecied ſome time after Haggai and Zechariah, for in his time the temple was rebuilt and the worſhip re-eſtabliſhed [L]; his miniſtry coincided with or ſucceeded that of Nehemiah. He cenſures the ſame offences that had excited the indignation of that governor, and which he had not been able entirely to reform: for Malachi, ſpeaking of God's ſuperior kindneſs to the Iſraelites above the Edomites, begins with declaiming againſt the prieſts for their prophane and mercenary conduct, and the people for their multiplied divorces and intermarriages with idolatrous nations [M]; he threatens them with puniſhment and rejection; declaring that God would "make his name great among the Gentiles [N]," for that he was wearied with the impiety of Iſrael; and thence the Prophet takes occaſion awfully to proclaim that the Lord

[L] Chap. i. 7, 10, 12. iii. 10.

[M] Mal. ii. 11. comp. with Neh. xiii. 23—27. and Mal. i. 10. iii. 8. with Neh. xiii. 10, 11.

[N] Chap. i. 11. The latter part of this verſe relative to the Mincha, or bread offering to be generally offered up, was conſidered in the primitive church as an expreſs prophecy of the chriſtian ſacrifice in the Euchariſt, of which the circumſtances are deſcribed under the typical rites of the Jewiſh worſhip. Hence the words of the paſſage were inſerted into an hymn in the liturgy of the church of Alexandria, which is called the liturgy of St. Mark. Vid. John iv. 21, 22. Mede's Diſcourſes on the Chriſtian Sacrifice, vol. i. B. II. p. 451.

whom

whom they fought ſhould ſuddenly come to his temple preceded by that meſſenger who, like an harbinger, ſhould prepare his way; that the Lord, when he ſhould appear, ſhould purify the ſons of Levi from their unrighteouſneſs, and refine them as metal from the droſs [o]; that then "the offering of Judah," the ſpiritual ſacrifice of the heart, ſhould "be pleaſant to the Lord," as was that of the Patriarchs, or their uncorrupted anceſtors [p]; and that the Lord would quickly exterminate the corruptions and adulteries that prevailed. He proceeds with an earneſt exhortation to repentance: promiſing high rewards and remembrance to the righteous in that laſt day, when the Lord ſhould ſelect unto himſelf a peculiar treaſure, and finally diſcern between the righteous and the wicked [q]. Malachi concludes with another aſſurance of approaching ſalvation to thoſe who feared God's name, from that "ſun of righteouſneſs which ſhould ariſe with healing in his wings;" and render them triumphant: enjoining till that day, an obſervance of the Law of Moſes: till the advent of Elijah [r], the Prophet, who before

[o] Chap. iii. 1—3. Iſaiah i. 25.

[p] Chap. iii. 4. "As in the days of old."

[q] Chap. iii. 16—18.

[r] Chap. iv. 5. John came in the ſpirit and power of Elias. Vid. Luke i. 17. and reſembled him in office and character. Vid. Mark ix. 12. Eccluſ xlviii. 10. The Seventy, following the received Jewiſh tradition, add "the Tiſhbite." In this ſenſe John denies himſelf to be Elias. John i. 21. He was not Elias himſelf, but another Elias, the antitype of the firſt.

the

the coming of that "great and dreadful day of the Lord, ſhould turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children [s] to their fathers;" who ſhould produce an entire amendment in the minds of the people. Thus Malachi ſealed up the volume of prophecy in the deſcription of that perſonage at whoſe appearance the evangeliſts begin the Goſpel hiſtory [t]; and he who terminated the illuſtrious ſucceſſion of the Prophets, and predicted the coming of the Baptiſt, was in an eſpecial degree entitled to a ſhare of our Saviour's teſtimony: who declared, in terms which defined the period and extent of prophecy, that "all the Prophets propheſied until John [u]." Malachi is likewiſe elſewhere frequently cited as a Prophet by the writers of the New Teſtament [x].

THE ſtile of Malachi has been repreſented as of the middle kind; it is not remarkable for beauty, as he lived in the decline of the Hebrew poetry, which decayed much after the Jewiſh captivity.

[s] It is propoſed to tranſlate עַל, al; not 'to,' but 'with.' Vid. Exod. xxxv. 22. & Kimchi. And then the paſſage means not that Elijah ſhould reconcile religious differences between intimate relations, but that he ſhould produce a general reformation. Vid. Arnald. in Ecclus xlviii. 10.

[t] Mark i. 1, 2.

[u] Matt. xi. 13. Luke xvi. 16. Janſen, in Ecclus xlviii. 2.

[x] Matt. xi. 10. xvii. 10—12. Mark i. 2. ix. 11, 12. Luke i. 17. vii. 27. Rom. ix. 13.

PREFACE

PREFACE

TO THE

APOCRYPHAL BOOKS.

THE books which are admitted into our Bibles under the deſcription of Apocryphal Books, are ſo denominated from a Greek word, which is expreſſive of the uncertainty and concealed nature of their original [A]. They have no title to be conſidered as inſpired writings; and though in reſpect of their antiquity and valuable contents they are an-

[A] Apocrypha, from *αποκρυπτω*, to hide. The word ſeems to have been firſt applied only to books of doubtful authority; or as it is uſed by Origen, to imply works out of the canon. It was afterwards employed to characterize ſpurious and pernicious books. It has been thought, that books of doubtful character were firſt termed Apocryphal by the Jews, becauſe they were removed *απο της κρυπτης* from the ark of the covenant, where the canonical books were placed. Euſeb. Lib. de Pond. & Menſur. p. 534; or becauſe ſhut up from the generality of readers, and concealed, as ſome aſſert, in a cheſt of the temple. In the primitive church, ſome of theſe books, eſpecially thoſe of Wiſdom and Eccleſiaſticus, were imparted to Catechumens, and all of them were allowed to be read under certain reſtrictions. Vid. Canon. Apoſt. Athan. Synopſ.

nexed to the canonical books, it is in a ſeparate diviſion: and by no means upon an idea that they are of equal authority, in point of doctrine, with them; or that they are to be received as oracles of faith; to ſanctify opinions, or to determine religious controverſies.

It is univerſally allowed, that theſe books were not in the canon of the Jews, to whom alone "were committed the oracles of God [B];" and, indeed, that they were compoſed after the cloſing of the ſacred catalogue; though ſome writers without a ſhadow of authority have pretended that ſome of them, as Tobit, Judith, Eccleſiaſticus, Baruch, and perhaps others, were received by the Jews into a ſecond canon [C], ſaid to be made by a council aſſembled at Jeruſalem in the time of Eleazar the high-prieſt, upon the occaſion of ſending the ſeventy-two interpreters to Ptolemy King of Egypt [D]; and that the reſt were canonized by a third council, aſſembled in the time of Sammai and Hillel; but of theſe councils, the Jews, tenacious as they are of traditions, have no account or memorial; and the books in queſtion were compoſed after the ceſſation of the prophetic ſpirit, by perſons who diſplayed no characters of inſpiration; and ſome of whom ſeem to

[B] Rom. iii. 2. Joſeph. cont. Apion, Lib. I. Hieron. Prol. Gal. Introduction, p. 8.

[C] Hence they are ſometimes called Deutero-canonical by the Romaniſts.

[D] Genebr. Chron. Lib. II. p. 190. col. 2. and p. 284. col. 1. Maldonate de Sacram. Pœnit. q. de Purgat. p. 145. Serar. in Macc. Prælog. iii.

have

have disclaimed its pretensions [E]; and therefore they were ranged by the Jews among the writings which they termed Hagiographa, in an inferior sense of that word [F].

TOBIT and Judith were, indeed, supposed by the Rabbinical conceits, to have been derived from that lower kind of inspiration which was called Bath Col filia vocis [G]. But this was an absurd fancy, and none of the books are cited either as prophetic or doctrinal by our Saviour or his apostles [H]; and though some writers have pretended to discover a coincidence between certain passages contained in them, and others in the New Testament, it will be found that the evangelical writers on these occasions only accidentally concur in sentiment or expression with the authors of the apocryphal books; or that the resemblance results from an imitation of

[E] 1 Macc. ix. 27. 2 Macc. ii. 30, 31. xv. 38.

[F] The later Jews esteemed some of the prophetical books to be Hagiographa in an higher sense of the word; supposing them to be derived from the second degree in their scale of prophecy. Vid. Maimon. More Nevoch. P. II. c. xlv. Huet. in Judith. The word was, perhaps, first intended to describe the uninspired productions of holy men; and afterwards improperly applied to fanciful distinctions of the sacred books. Vid. Introd. p. 10.

[G] Preface to the Prophets, p. 320, note F.

[H] Index Testimon. a Christ. & Apost. citat. ex. Vet. T. in fin. Bibl. vulg. edit. Sixt. V. & Clemen. VIII. Venet. 1616. Catharin. opusc. de Script. Canon. Stapleton de Autor. S. Script. Lib. II. c. iv. § 14. and Preface to the second book of Esdras, which was written or interpolated after the publication of the New Testament.

paſſages in the ſacred writings of the Old Teſtament, which the evangelical and the apocryphal writers might equally have had in view. But indeed, if any occaſional alluſion, or borrowed expreſſions, could be proved, they would by no means eſtabliſh the authority of the apocryphal books; which might be referred to, as were other books by the ſacred writers, without any deſign to confer on them a character of divine authority [I].

It is certain, that long after the time of our Saviour, the Hebrew canon conſiſted but of twenty-two books [K]; and that at this day the Jews adhere to the ſame liſt, though by ſeparating books formerly united they increaſe the number; and it is not probable, or conſiſtent with any authentic accounts, to ſuppoſe, that at any time before or after Chriſt, the canon which the Jews ſo religiouſly reſpected ſhould have been altered by them. It is not probable that they ſhould have admitted any addition after the death of Simon the Juſt, who was the laſt of the great ſynagogue; or that, if ſuch addition had been allowed, they ſhould have expunged theſe writings which contain nothing ſo favourable to chriſtianity as the prophetic books which they have ſuf-

[I] 2 Tim. iii. 8. Heb. xii. 21. Jude, ver. 14. Origen. Prol. in Cant.

[K] Joſeph. cont. Apion. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. III. c. ix. R. Aſarias in Meor Enaim, p. 29, 141, 169, 175. R. Gedaliah Ben-Jechajah in Shalſhelefh Haccab. p. 68, 99, 104. R. Abrah. Zachus in Juchaſin, p. 136. R. David Gantz in Tſemach David, Part II. p. 10. R. Menaſſe Ben Iſrael de Creatione, Prob. X. p. 45.

fered

fered to continue inviolate. Had the books been erafed before the time of Chriſt, the ſacrilege muſt have excited his cenſures; and ſince the eſtabliſhment of the Goſpel any endeavour to deface the canon muſt have been detected and expoſed.

These apocryphal books conſtituted no part of the Septuagint verſion of the ſcriptures, as ſet forth by the tranſlators under Ptolemy. It is ſuppoſed that many of them at leaſt were received by the Jewiſh ſynagogue eſtabliſhed at Jeruſalem, which poſſibly might have derived its origin from the period of that tranſlation [L]. From the Helleniſtic Jews they were probably accepted by the Chriſtian church; but by whomſoever, and at whatever time they were communicated, it is certain that they were not received as canonical, or enrolled among the productions of the inſpired writers; ſince they are not in any of the earlier catalogues [M]; and are excluded from the ſacred liſt by the fathers of the Greek and Latin church, who flouriſhed during the four firſt centuries [N]; though they are often cited by them as

[L] Grabii Septuagint. Proleg. ad Lib. Hiſt. c. i. Prop. 24.

[M] Conſtit. Apoſt. Lib. II. c. lvii. Canon Apoſt. Can. ult. The preſent copies of the canons of the apoſtles, which include the three books of Maccabees, are evidently corrupted, the canons having formerly correſponded with the canon of the Council of Laodicea. Vid. Zonar. in Concil. Laodic. Can. 59. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. IV. c. xxv. Lib. V. c. xxiv. Lib. VI. c. xix. Coſin's Scholiaſt. Hiſt. ch. iv. ſect. 45.

[N] Dionyſ. Hierarch. Eccleſ. c. iii. Melito, ap. Euſeb. Lib. IV. c. xxv. Orig. ap. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. VI.

as valuable and inſtructive works, and ſometimes even as divine, and as ſcripture in a looſe and popular ſenſe [o]. In the language of the primitive church they were ſtiled eccleſiaſtical [p], as contradiſtinguiſhed from thoſe infallible works which were

c. xxv. Demonſ. Evang. L. VIII. Baſil in Orig. Philocal. c. iii. Ruffin. Verſ. Euſeb. Lib. VI. Tertull. cont. Marcion. Carm. Lib. IV. c. vii. who reckoning Ruth and Lamentations ſeparately, makes the number twenty-four. Euſeb. Demon. Evang. Lib. VIII. Athan. Epiſt. 39. Athan. Synopſ. Hilar. Prol. Explan. in Pſalm. Cyrill. Catech. IV. Epiphan. Hæres. 8. cont. Epicur. & Hæres. 76. cont. Anomæos, & de Pond. & Menſur. Baſil. Philoc. c. iii. Gregor. Nazian. de ver. & genuin. Lib. S. Script. Amphiloc. Epiſt. ad Seleuc. Chryſoſt. Homil. IV. in Geneſ. & Homil. 8. in Epiſt. ad Hebræ. Hieron. in Prolog. Galeat. in Lib. Solom. and Præf. in Eſdram, & in Paralip. Coſin's Schol. Hiſt. Canon VI. ſect. 73. Ruffin. Symbol. Apoſt. ſect. 35, 36.

[o] Origen cites Tobit and the Maccabees as ſcripture. Lib. VIII. in Epiſt. ad Rom. de Princip. Lib. II. c. i. Homil. 3. in Cant. as he does likewiſe the Shepherd of Hermas, and the Book of Henoch, without believing them to be canonical in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word. Origen, indeed, believed that the Shepherd of Hermas was inſpired. Vid. Enarrat. in Epiſt. ad Rom. p. 411. but this was his peculiar opinion. Vid. Philocal. c. i. The fathers in general who cite it as ſcripture, uſe the term only in a popular ſenſe. As Irenæus adv. Hæres. Lib. IV. & ap. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. L. IV. c. 8. & Athanaſius de Incarnat. verb. Tom. i. p. 55. who expreſsly ſays that it is not ſtrictly canonical. Epiſt. Paſch. Tom. ii. p. 39, 40. So Euſebius quotes Joſephus and Ariſtæas, as well as the Maccabees. Vid. Præp. Evang. Lib. X. c. viii. Demonſt. Evang. Lib. IX. and X. Thus, alſo, Epiphanius calls the apoſtolical conſtitutions divine. Vid. Hæres. 8. and 10. Can. Lib. V. c. v.

[p] Ruffin. in Symbolum.

canonized

canonized as unqueſtionably inſpired, and alſo from thoſe erroneous and pernicious writings which were ſtigmatized and proſcribed as apocryphal.

The eccleſiaſtical books, under which diviſion were contained other productions beſides thoſe now termed apocryphal, as the Shepherd of Hermas [Q], the doctrine of the apoſtles [R], and the firſt epiſtle of Clement [S], though conſidered as human works, and as ſubordinate to the ſacred books, were nevertheleſs approved and read by the church as capable of furniſhing much inſtruction. The fathers quote them as pious and venerable books, and as deſervedly held in great eſtimation: they ſpeak of them in high and hyperbolical terms, as ſacred, as bearing ſome reſemblance to the inſpired writings, but not as certainly inſpired, or as of ſufficient authority in points of doctrine; for thoſe paſſages which they are repreſented to cite from them as ſuch, are cited in ſpurious or doubtful books, or from ſimilar places in ſacred writ. Abundant teſtimonies have been produced to prove that they were not received as canonical during the four firſt centuries; and they have never been generally admitted into the canon of the Greek church; nor were they judged canonical in the ſame degree as the Law and the Prophets, even in the Weſtern church, till the Council of Trent, in contempt of all authority and conſiſtency, pronounced them ſo to be.

[Q] Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. III. c. iii.

[R] This book was probably the ſame which is now called the apoſtolical canons. Vid. Athan. Epiſt. xxxix.

[S] Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccl. Lib. III. c. xiv. Lib. IV. c. xxii.

In the firſt general council held at Nice, A. D. 325, none of theſe books appear to have been admitted as canonical [T] in any ſenſe of that word; and they certainly were not received by the Council of Laodicea, which was held about forty years afterwards, of which [U] the canons were accepted into the code of the univerſal church [X], and which acknowledged precitely the ſame books that we receive.

In the fifth century St. Auſtin [Y] and the Coun-

[T] Coſin's Scholaſt. ch. vi. ſect. 54.

[U] The Greek copies of this council reckon Baruch, the Lamentations, and the Epiſtle, as compoſing one canonical book with Jeremiah; and Athanaſius and Cyril have been ſuppoſed to have received Baruch as canonical. But Baruch is mentioned in the catalogues referred to, not probably as the apocryphal book, but for a more full deſcription of Jeremiah's work, in which Baruch is often mentioned, and in the writing of which he was employed; and the epiſtle may mean that contained in the twenty-ninth chapter of Jeremiah's book. Vid. Coſin's Schol. Hiſt. ch. vi. ſect. 61. and Preface to Baruch.

[X] Concil. Calced. Can. 1. and Can. 163. Concil. Conſtant. 6. in Trullo, Can. 2. This laſt council confirmed alſo the council of Carthage, which admitted the apocrypha; but it muſt therefore have confirmed that canon only as it admitted them in a ſecondary ſenſe, otherwiſe it could not have confirmed that of Laodicea, which rejected them as not equal. Vid. Juſtin. Novel. 131. Juſtellus Præf. in Cod. Eccleſ. Univerſal.

[Y] Auguſt. cont. Epiſt. Gaud. Donat. cap. xxiii. Epiſt. 61. ad Dulcit. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxxvi. Propter quorundam martyrum paſſiones vehementes atque mirabiles, qui antequam Chriſtus veniſſet in carnem uſque ad mortem pro lege Dei certaverunt.

cil

cil of Carthage [z] appear to have admitted (rather in deference to popular opinion, and in compliance with that reverence which had arifen from ufe [A]), moft of the apocryphal books [B] as canonical; meaning, however, canonical in a fecondary fenfe; as ufeful to be read; and ftill with diftinction from thofe facred and inſpired books which were eſtabliſhed on the ſanction of the Jewiſh canon, and on the teſtimony of our Saviour and his apoſtles. After this time, other fathers [c] and councils [D] ſeem oc-

[z] The forty-ſeventh canon in which thoſe books are conſecrated, is erroneouſly attributed to the third council of Carthage, which, as the titles ſay, aſſembled in 397; for it muſt have belonged to a later council held during the time of Boniface, to whom it is referred; and it correſponds nearly with a canon framed by an African council, held under the conſulate of Honorius XII. and Theodoſius VIII. in 419, except that it receives Baruch and Maccabees, which the latter omits. Vid. Cod. Canon, Eccleſ. African. Can. 24. & Binii, & Juſtelli, not. in Concil. Carthag. 3. Can. 47, 48.

[A] Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxxvi. & c. xliii. Epiſt. 9 and 10. ad Hieron. "Quia a patribus," (ſays the canon) "iſta accepimus legenda." Vid. Coſin's Scholaſt. Hiſt. ch. vii. not. 82.

[B] Neither Auſtin, nor the canon attributed to this council, enumerate the fourth (that is, the ſecond) book of Eſdras, Baruch, nor the Prayer of Manaſſeth; and the canon omits the books of Maccabees. Vid. Juſtellus in Notis a Can. xxiv.

[c] See alſo the ſuſpected epiſtle of Innocent I. ad Exuper. and the decree attributed to Gelaſius, ad omnes Epiſc. in Can. Vet. Eccleſ. Rom. Edit. Par. 1609. Iſidor. Orig. Lib. VI. c. i. & Procem. Sap. & Ecclus.

[D] Sum. Caranze in Decret. 7. Concil. Florent. & Coſin's Scholaſt. Hiſt. ch. xvi. n. 159. The council of Florence was

caſionally to have conſidered theſe books as canonical, and inferior only to the ſacred writings; but always with diſtinction, and with expreſs declarations of their inferiority when that queſtion was ſtrictly agitated [E]; till at length the Council of Trent, notwithſtanding the teſtimony of all Jewiſh antiquity, and contrary to the ſenſe of the primitive church, thought fit to pronounce them all, (except the prayer of Manaſſeth, and the third and fourth books of Eſdras [F],) together with the unwritten traditions relative to faith and manners, as ſtrictly and in every reſpect canonical, and of the ſame authority as thoſe indubitate books which had been copied from the Jewiſh into the Chriſtian canon; and received the atteſtation of Chriſt and his apoſtles: of which the inſpiration was manifeſted by the character of their compoſers, and proved by the accompliſhment of thoſe prophecies which they contain [G].

This canon was confirmed by ſevere anathemas [H] againſt all who ſhould reject it. And from this

not properly œcumenical; the canon which repreſents the apocryphal books as inſpired is probably a forgery, as it is only in the epitomes.

[E] Coſin's canon of ſcripture: where this is proved by numberleſs references to the authors who flouriſhed from the firſt ages of the church, to the middle of the ſixteenth century. Vid. alſo, Raynold's Cenſura Apocryphorum.

[F] Bib. Sac. Sixt. V. & Clement. VIII. Juſſu edita Juxt. decret. Concil. Trid.

[G] "Omnes Libros, &c. pari pietatis affectu ac reverentiâ ſuſcipit & veneratur." Concil. Trident. Seſſ. 4.

[H] "Siquis autem libros ipſos integros cum omnibus ſuis partibus, &c. pro ſacris & canonicis non ſuſceperit, Anathema ſit."

time the Roman Catholics have endeavoured to maintain the canonical authority of theſe books, though their moſt ſtrenuous advocates are obliged to allow that they were not received into the canon of Ezra. They are compelled to yield a ſuperiority as to external ſanctions, to thoſe uncontroverted books which are excluſively canonized in the earlieſt and moſt authentic catalogues of the chriſtian church [I]; and labour to defend the deciſion of the Council of Trent, as to the apocryphal writings, by appealing to the authority of preceding councils, of which the canons were never generally received, and which admitted the conteſted books as canonical only in a ſubordinate and ſecondary ſenſe. It is therefore upon the moſt juſt and tenable grounds that our church has framed her ſixth article, where in agreement with all Proteſtant churches ſhe adheres in her catalogue to thoſe writings of which there never was any doubt; and agreeably to the doctrine of the four patriarchal churches [K], as recorded by Cyril, Athanaſius, Anaſtaſius, and Gregory Nazianzen, rejects thoſe books which are ſtiled apocryphal in our Bibles, though ſhe read them, as St. Jerom obſerves, did the Weſtern church [L], "for example

ſit." Vid. Concil. Trid. Seſſ. 4. & in Bulla P. Pii. IV. ſup. forma Juram. Profeſſ. fid.

[I] Sixt. Senens. Bib. Lib. I. ſect. 1. Bellarm. de Verb. Dei, c. x. Sect. itaque, c. xiv. ſect. 1.

[K] Thoſe of Jeruſalem, Alexandria, Antioch, and Conſtantinople.

[L] Hieron. Prol. in Lib. Solom. ad Chrom. & Heliod.

of life, and inſtruction of manners;" and it muſt be confeſſed in general, that notwithſtanding ſome paſſages of exceptionable tendency, and ſome relations of improbable circumſtances, they are books entitled to great reſpect: as written by perſons who being intimately converſant with the ſacred writings, had, as it were, imbibed their ſpirit, and caught their pious enthuſiaſm. Whoever reads them with attention, muſt occaſionally be ſtruck by the ſplendid ſentiments, and ſublime deſcriptions which they contain. They ſometimes likewiſe preſent us with paſſages borrowed from the ſacred writings, and with the fineſt imitations of inſpired eloquence; they include perhaps ſome ſcattered fragments of divine wiſdom, and ſome traditional precepts derived from men enlightened by a prophetic ſpirit. They occaſionally illuſtrate the accompliſhment of prophecy; and throw light on the ſcriptures by explaining the manners, ſentiments, and hiſtory of the Jews. They bear then an indirect and impartial teſtimony to the truth of our religion; they are venerable for their antiquity: recommended by long eſtabliſhed approbation, and in ſome meaſure conſecrated to our regard by the commendations of the church, and by being annexed to the inſpired writings. Where they are defective, they may have been perhaps injured or corrupted by ſubſequent additions, as not being watched over with ſuch religious care as the ſacred books. It may be added alſo, that many of thoſe paſſages which appear to have a bad tendency, are capable of a good conſtruction, and that, perhaps, ſome

ſome blemiſhes may be attributed to our tranſlators, who in rendering the apocryphal books, have been accuſed of much careleſſneſs [M]. They who are diſpoſed to profit by their peruſal will find it not difficult by the light of the inſpired books, to diſcriminate and ſelect what is excellent and conſiſtent with truth, and to reject ſuch objectionable particulars as prove them to be the production of unaſſiſted, and ſometimes miſtaken men.

[M] The learned Du Port, then Greek Profeſſor at Cambridge, was among the ſeven able perſons employed under King James; but though his work has much merit, it is very often faulty and imperfect. The tranſlators ſeem to have attributed too little conſequence to the apocryphal books, though Dr. Geddes affirms, that the apocryphal books are tranſlated better than the reſt of the Bible, and attributes it to the tranſlators not having been cramped by the fathers of the Maſora.

OF THE

FIRST BOOK OF ESDRAS.

THE Firſt Book of Eſdras, or Ezra [A], is generally ſuppoſed to have been the work of ſome Helleniſtic Jew. It is uncertain at what time it was compoſed; the particulars contained in it are related by Joſephus: it was therefore probably written before the time of that hiſtorian. The book, though in its ſtile it has much of the Hebrew idiom, was probably never extant in that language [B]; at leaſt it certainly was not admitted into the Hebrew canon. It was annexed, however, to ſome copies of the Septuagint [C], and placed in ſome manuſcripts be-

[A] The word is written עזרא in the Hebrew, and Ἔσδρας in the Greek.

[B] Iſidor. Orig. Lib. VI. c. ii.

[C] It was not in any of the Greek manuſcripts uſed by the editors of the Complutenſian Bible; but it was found in ſome Greek copies when Aldus was printing his Septuagint at Venice. It was publiſhed from a manuſcript in the library of St. Victor, at Paris, by Robert Stephens, as alſo in the London Polyglot. There is a Syriac verſion of this book.

fore

fore the book of Ezra [D], that of Nehemiah being inſerted between the two. Standing in that order, it was called the Firſt Book of Ezra, and the authentic work of Ezra, together with that of Nehemiah, which ſeems to have been joined with it, was called the Second Book of Ezra [E]. This arrangement was probably adopted in conſideration of the chronological order of the events deſcribed in the books reſpectively [F]. In ſome Greek editions it is, however, placed with more propriety as to its character, between the Song of the Three Children, and the Wiſdom of Solomon [G].

As this book was inſerted in ſome copies of the Septuagint, it was read in the Greek church; and the Council of Carthage, which canonized the vulgar tranſlation made from the Septuagint [H], appears to have admitted this book, together with other ſpurious additions, as canonical [I], in that extended acceptation of the word which implied only, worthy to be read. St. Auſtin, likewiſe, conſidered it as

[D] Luc. Brug. in 3 Eſdras.

[E] Bellarm. de Verb. Dei, Lib. I. c. xx. ſect. ad de.

[F] It ſtands in the ſame order in the Alexandrian code, and in the Syriac verſion.

[G] As in the Frankfort edition of 1597, and in that of Baſil of 1518. The Latin manuſcripts vary. In ſome it is placed after Nehemiah, and called the Second Book of Ezra. Vid. Calmet Diſſert. ſur le Troiſieme Livre d'Eſdras.

[H] Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XIII. c. xxiv.

[I] See the forty-ſeventh canon improperly aſſigned to the third Council of Carthage, but belonging to one held in a later period. Vid. Preface to Apocrypha, p. 518, note 2.

canonical

canonical in the ſame ſenſe: that is, as an eccleſiaſtical book, attributed to Ezra; and which might even be thought to contain a prophetic paſſage, if by truth [K] deſcribed as conquering all things, ſhould be underſtood Chriſt. The book is alſo cited by others of the fathers as a work entitled, the Firſt Book of Eſdras: as aſcribed to him, and as a reſpectable work [L]; but never as of equal authority with the canonical books [M]. St. Jerom without ſcruple pronounced this and the following books to be viſionary and ſpurious [N]; and it was rejected even by the Council of Trent, though it was ſuffered to continue in the printed editions as the ſecond or third book of Ezra, till the publication of the Bible by Sixtus the Fifth, when it was placed apart from the canonical books [O]; and notwithſtanding Genebrard [P] ſtill maintained its authenticity, the Romaniſts in general conſider it as apocryphal. It

[K] Chap. i. 38. & Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxxvi.

[L] Cyprian Ep. 74. ad Pompeian. Clemens Alex. Strom. Lib. II. Juſtin Martyr Dial. cum Tryphon, p. 297. Baſil Epiſt. ad Chilon. Athan. Orat. III. cont. Arian. Auguſt. de Doct. Chriſt. Lib. II. c. viii.

[M] Joh. Driedo in Cat. Script. Lib. I. c. iv. ad Diffic. 4.

[N] Hieron. Epiſt. ad Domnion. & Rogatian. Nec Apocryphorum tertii & quarti (Eſdræ) Somniis delectetur, ſays Jerom.

[O] In ſome old copies of the Latin Bibles, this and the ſucceeding book, as alſo the Prayer of Manaſſeth, were marked with a *non legitur*: as an intimation that they were not to be publickly read in the church.

[P] Genebrard in Chron. ad An. 3730, p. 95, 96.

certainly

certainly could not have been written by Ezra, whoſe authentic work it contradicts in many particulars; and it has no pretenſions to be revered as the production of an inſpired perſon, although great part of it be extracted from the ſacred writings.

The name of Ezra was at all times particularly reverenced by the Jews, who were accuſtomed in honour of his memory to remark, that he was worthy that the Law ſhould have been given by his hands unto Iſrael, if Moſes had not been before him. In conſequence of this reputation, numberleſs ſpurious works were publiſhed at different times under his name; and however they might at firſt, whether produced before or after Chriſt, have borne the palpable marks of forgery, were yet received by the credulous and unlearned. If the boldneſs of the impoſture provoked oppoſition, this was ſoon wearied and forgotten; and the books gradually roſe into reputation under the ſanction of a great name [q].

The Firſt Book of Eſdras includes a period of about ninety years. The ſhort hiſtorical ſketch of

[q] Beſides the books aſcribed to Ezra in our Bibles, and other writings before mentioned, vid. Preface to Ezra, p. 211, Picus Mirandula profeſſes to have read the Cabala of Eſdras, written in ſeventy books, and informs us, that they contained many myſteries relating to Chriſtianity. Sixtus the Fourth is ſaid to have projected a tranſlation of them, but only three were finiſhed at his death; the learned diſpute concerning the character, and even the exiſtence of theſe books. Vid. Mirand. Apol. p. 82. 2 Eſd. xiv. 46. Fabricii Codex Pſeudepig. Petr. Crinit de Honeſt. Diſcip. Lib. XXV. c. iii. Sixt. Senens. Bib. Lib. II. Epiphan. de Pond. & Menſ. § 10.

the

the time which intervened between the celebration of the Paſſover by Joſiah, and the captivity of the Jews, as furniſhed in the firſt chapter of this book, is taken chiefly from the thirty-fifth and thirty-ſixth chapters of the Second Book of Chronicles. The ſtrange but lively ſtory of the three competitors for the favour of Darius, which appears to have been introduced to recommend and embelliſh the character of Zerubbabel [R], might have been founded on ſome popular traditions, as it is related by Joſephus; but it is certainly fabulous in moſt of its particulars, and could not concern Zerubbabel, who at the period aſſigned was at Jeruſalem [S].

THE reſt of the work, which is chiefly compiled from the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, is disfigured by many improbable and contradictory additions, and by many circumſtances which appear to have been deſignedly introduced in order to diſguiſe and vary the relation [T]. It contains, perhaps, nothing exceptionable with reſpect to doctrine or precept; but its accounts are ſo incorporated with falſehood, that the compilers of our Liturgy have not appointed any ſelections from it to be read in the ſervice of the

[R] Chap. iii. iv. v.

[S] Ezra ii. 2. Joſephus erroneouſly ſays, and perhaps on the authority of this book, that Zerubbabel returned from Jeruſalem to Darius. Vid. de Antiq. Lib. XI. c. iv.

[T] Comp. chap. ii. 15. with Ezra ii. 2. Chap. iv. 48. with Ezra v. 13. Chap. iv. 43, 46. with Ezra vi. 1. Chap. iv. 44, 57. with chap. vi. 18, 19. and Ezra i. 7—11. Chap. v. 40. with Nehem. viii. 9. Chap. v. 47, 48. with Ezra i. 1—3, &c.

church.

church. Many particulars, indeed, interſperſed through the book, and too numerous here to be produced [u], are utterly inconſiſtent with probability, chronology, and the relations of ſcripture. From fictitious circumſtances, however, ſome inſtruction may be drawn, though we cannot but regret that the author of the fine encomium on truth [x], ſhould have ſo departed from its principles as to write under the aſſumed character of inſpiration.

[u] Calmet & Arnald.

[x] Chap. iv. 38—40. The learned Thorndike by truth here ſpoken of, underſtands the truth which God by his law had declared to his people, and ſuppoſes Zerubbabel to have intended to encourage the King to protect it by countenancing the building of the temple. Vid. Thorndike's Epilogue, ch. xxxiv. p. 212.

OF THE

SECOND BOOK OF ESDRAS.

SOME writers have conceived that this work was compoſed by the ſame perſon that aſſumed the character of Ezra in the preceding book; but though it be equally uncertain by whom and at what period each book was produced, there is reaſon to think that they were not both derived from one perſon, ſince they differ in ſtile, and have no connection or agreement with each other. Each author, however, has borrowed the ſame title; and each has inſerted a genealogy in the character of Ezra: with ſome difference, indeed, in the accounts, and both with variation from the lineage furniſhed by the inſpired writer in his authentic book [A].

[A] The accounts in 1 Eſdras viii. 1, 2. and in 2 Eſdras i. 1—3. differ from each other, and both diſagree with the genealogy inſerted in Ezra vii. 1. They were, however, all deſigned for the ſame perſon, as is evident from the general agreement of the ſix firſt names; and probably the variations ariſe only from accidental corruptions, or from different modes of calculation; indeed, the author of the Second Book of Eſdras enumerates three names more in this genealogy than do the authors of the preceding books.

THE

THE Second Book of Eſdras is not now to be found in any Hebrew or Greek manuſcripts. It is ſuppoſed to have been originally written in the Greek language; but is extant only in a few Latin copies [B], and in an Arabic verſion [C]. It is generally maintained that the work could not have been the genuine production of Ezra, as it ſeems to bear ſome intrinſic marks of having been compoſed after his time, and, indeed, after the period at which the prophetic ſpirit is reputed to have ceaſed [D]; notwithſtanding alſo the fine ſpirit of piety that pervades the work, and the author's confident aſſumption of the prophetic character, his pretenſions to inſpiration

[B] Calmet ſtates that it was firſt printed in the Latin edition of Nuremberg, publiſhed in 1521. Diſſert. ſur le Quatrieme Livre d'Eſdras, note L.

[C] In the Arabic verſion it is called the Firſt Book of Eſdras. This verſion differs much from the Latin copies, and has many interpolations; one particularly concerning the intermediate ſtate of the ſoul.

[D] Chap. ii. 39, 40. The author in the laſt of theſe verſes ſpeaks of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi; though the two former did not probably flouriſh as Prophets till after the return from the captivity, and Malachi not till above 100 years after the decree of Cyrus. Ezra, indeed, if he had been the author of the book, might, as ſpeaking prophetically, have mentioned even in the captivity theſe Prophets by name; but beſides other reaſons that tend to prove that the work was written after his time, it may be remarked, that the Prophets are here enumerated, not according to the order of the Hebrew canon, but according to that of the Septuagint. Vid. alſo, chap. xv. 46. where Aſia is mentioned, a name probably not known in the time of Ezra.

have not been admitted. It is not, indeed, probable that an inſpired writer would have claimed a name to which he was not entitled; or have interſperſed in his work thoſe extravagant conceits and apparent inconſiſtencies which occaſionally disfigure and degrade this production. The book, it is true, contains much ſublime inſtruction; many animated exhortations to righteouſneſs, and many ſentiments not unworthy of the ſacred ſource from whence they are related to have flowed. It repreſents Ezra as commanded to remonſtrate with the people for their diſobedience; and on their contempt of God's words, as addreſſing himſelf to the heathen, whom he enjoins to prepare for that "everlaſting light" which ſhould ſhine upon them. It deſcribes the Prophet as pleading with ſubmiſſive piety to remove the afflictions of his captive countrymen; as anxiouſly enquiring why the choſen people of the Almighty ſhould ſuffer ſeverer puniſhments for their ſins than the heathen for whom they were ſeemingly rejected [E]; as lamenting the effects of entailed corruption [F]; as bewailing the evil propenſities and condition of men, of whom a few only appear to be marked out and diſtinguiſhed as objects of divine favour [G]. He is ſaid to have been honoured with viſions and

[E] Chap. iii. 28. iv. 23—31.

[F] Chap. iii. 20—22. iv. 30—32. vii. 48. The author ſpeaks, indeed, of the extent of Adam's tranſgreſſion with a clearneſs that argues an acquaintance with the evangelical account of its effects.

[G] Chap. iv. 12. vii. 4—54. ix. 15, 16.

divine

divine communications in anſwer to thoſe enquiries. The boaſted revelations are deſcribed in a lofty and prophetic ſtile: in a manner ſimilar to that adopted by Daniel, Ezekiel, and St. John. They diſcountenance with becoming dignity the preſumptuous curioſity and complaints of man [H]; contain very elevated deſcriptions of God's attributes [I]; and reſt the equity of his proceedings on the projected deciſions of a future judgment. They impart conſolatory aſſurances of returning favour, and repreſent in an intereſting viſion, Jeruſalem re-eſtabliſhed on its foundations [K]. The angel likewiſe, in theſe pretended viſions, reveals many ſtriking prophecies relative to the Meſſiah [L]; the deſtruction of the Roman empire [M]; and the fate of Egypt; of Babylon [N], and

[H] Chap. iv. 5—11. comp. with John iii. 12.

[I] Chap. vii. 62—70. viii. 20—23, 39. xvi. 54—63.

[K] Chap. ix. x. 27, &c.

[L] Chap. ii. 34—48. & infra, p. 540, & notes.

[M] Chap. xi. xii. The prophecies relative to the eagle might have been written by an uninſpired writer acquainted with Daniel's book, either before or after Chriſt. The prophecy concerning the lion, which denounced deſtruction to the eagle, is ſaid by the Arabic tranſlator, to be "a prophecy of the Lord the Meſſiah." Vid. chap. xi. 37.

[N] Chap. xv. xvi. In ſome ancient copies theſe two laſt chapters ſeem to conſtitute a diſtinct book, called the Fifth Book of Eſdras, and divided into ſeven chapters. Lee thinks that they have all the characters of antiquity, and reſemble the prophetic ſtile. They ſpeak of the deſtruction of nations, and of ſome general troubles from which the faithful only ſhould be delivered. The twenty-ninth and following verſes of the fifteenth chapter, have been thought to relate to the

and of other nations, beſides others of very obſcure and uncertain interpretation [o].

So far there appears nothing incompatible with the character of Ezra; and we ſhould be inclined to conſider the work as his production, or at leaſt as a compilation of ſome fragments written by him, were it not for the deficiency of external ſanctions; and for the intermixture of particulars ſeemingly inconſiſtent with the character and period of that Prophet. The author's pretenſions, indeed, to inſpiration, as well as to the name of Ezra, are deſtroyed by many falſe and abſurd particulars [p], which are ſo incorporated with the work, that they cannot always be conſidered as ſubſequent interpolations. The book was never admitted into the Hebrew canon; and there is no ſufficient authority to prove that it was

victories of the Saracens; and Lee by dragons underſtands thoſe who lived in dens and caverns of the earth. Vid. Lee, p. 45 and 156, with note annexed to Fifth Book of Eſdras. None of the pretended prophecies, however, in this book, are ſo clear and original (except thoſe relating to the Meſſiah, which were probably written after the time of Chriſt) that they might not have been framed by an uninſpired writer converſant with the prophetic books.

[o] Chap. v. 1—13. vi. 7—28.

[p] Chap. iv. 45—52. v. 5. vii. 11. xiii. 46—47. Baſnage Hiſt. of the Jews, B. VI. ch. ii. Chap. xiv. 10—12. St. Cyprian and others, who believed that the end of the world was near at hand in their time, are ſuppoſed to have derived the notion from this and other paſſages in this book. Vid. Cyprian ad Demetrian. George Hakewill on Providence, London, 1627. fol. Freinſhem Orat. VII. and IX. See other idle tales in chap. xiv. 21—48.

ever

ever extant in the Hebrew language [q]. Its pretended prophecies are not produced in evidence by Chriſtian writers, ſtriking as ſuch teſtimony muſt have been, if genuine; and the book was never publickly or generally acknowledged either in the Greek or Latin church [r]; nor was it ever inſerted in the ſacred catalogue, by either councils or fathers; but is expreſsly repreſented as apocryphal by St. Jerom, who deſcribes it as rejected by the church [s].

The many wild and proſperous fancies with which the work abounds, ſeem to prove that it was the production of a Rabbinical Jew [t]. The learned Mr. Lee is inclined to think that it was written or compiled by an Egyptian Jew before the time of Chriſt; and it has been obſerved in ſupport of this opinion, that it is cited or referred to as a Jewiſh

[q] Lee ſuppoſes that Picus Mirandula, and Leo Judæus, had ſeen, and relates, that Petrus Galatinus had heard of an Hebrew copy; as alſo, that Scaliger had boaſted of having *the book or books* of Eſdras in the Syriac; but the preſumptions of its having ever exiſted in the Hebrew are but ſlender. Lee's Diſſ. p. 152.

[r] Bib. Sac. Sixt. V. and Clement. VIII.

[s] Hieron. Epiſt. ad Domnion & Rogat. & Præf. in Lib. Eſd. In anſwer to Vigilantius, who had produced ſome paſſages from this book, he ſays, "Tu Vigilans dormis, et dormiens ſcribis: et proponis mihi Librum Apocryphum qui ſub nomine Eſdræ, a te, et ſimilibus tui legitur." Vid. alſo, Athan. Synop. de Lib. Eſd. Wolfius Bib. Heb. tom. i. n. 1768, p. 941, & tom. ii. p. 194, 196, 209.

[t] Chap. iii. 6, 19. v. 5, 52—55. vi. 42, 44, 49—52, 55. Raynold's Prælect. 27.

book by very ancient writers [u]; and that it may be ſuppoſed to treat of that traditional and myſterious knowledge which was ſaid to have been derived as an oral explication of the Law from Moſes; and which was taught in the Alexandrian ſchool of the Jews. Mr. Lee obſerves, that in many particulars it reſembles other apocryphal books, undoubtedly written before the time of our Saviour [x]; and that there is ſome ground for ſuppoſing that the book of Enoch [y], and that of the ſhepherd of Hermas [z], might have proceeded from the ſame author as the preſent work.

ON

[u] Tertull. Lib. de Habit. Mul. c. iii. & cont. Marcion. Carm. Lib. IV. c. vii. Clemens Alex. Strom. Lib. IV. & Lib. I. & Euſeb. Lib. VI. c. xii. Ambroſe de bono Mortis, c. x. n. 45, & Lib. II. in Lucam. St. Ambroſe cites ch. vii. 32. as ſcripture, and he profeſſes to cite on this occaſion from Ezra; in order to ſhew that the heathens had drawn their beſt maxims from our books.

[x] As to the two laſt chapters of Tobit, and likewiſe the books of Baruch and Wiſdom. The book bears, likewiſe, ſome reſemblance to paſſages in the ancient Targums, as thoſe of Jonathan and Onkelos. See Kidder's Demonſtration of the Meſſiah, and Allix's Defence of the Unity and Diſtinction of the Divine Nature.

[y] This book is cited by St. Jude, ver. 14. if not by St. Peter; and an interpretation is borrowed from it by the Targumiſt Jonathan. It is ſuppoſed to have been known in the age of Alexander Polyhiſtor, above an hundred years before the birth of Chriſt, or even earlier.

[z] The viſions of Hermas much reſemble thoſe of Eſdras in many ſtriking particulars. They are thought to have been written about ſeventy-five years after the vulgar æra. The book

On a ſuppoſition that this work was written before the period of Chriſt, we muſt admit that thoſe particulars which appear to be prophetic of circumſtances relative to the Meſſiah and his kingdom, were collected from an acquaintance with the inſpired books of the Old Teſtament; or that the work has been interpolated by ſome writer who lived under the Goſpel diſpenſation [A]. But it exhibits, in every part, ſuch a manifeſt reſemblance to the doctrines, ſentiments, and expreſſions, of the evangelical writers; and correſponds ſo much with paſſages of the New Teſtament as to particulars interwoven in the contexture of the book; that we muſt ſuppoſe it to have been written after the publication of the Goſpel, unleſs we admit that the evangelical writers

book of Hermas was highly eſteemed in the Greek, and hardly known in the Weſtern church, though now extant only in Latin. Vid. Lee's Diſc. p. 138.

[A] Mr. Lee ſeems to inſinuate that the book might have been corrupted by the Cerinthians, or even by Cerinthus himſelf, who in his religious ſyſtem, combined with the doctrines of Chriſt the opinions of the Jews, and the errors of the Gnoſtics. Some, indeed, have imagined, that this book is the very apocalypſe of that heretic referred to by the ancients, as it ſeems to contain ſome notions favourable to the Cerinthian hereſy; and Cerinthus is related to have written a kind of apocalypſe upon the model of St. John's Revelation. Vid. Lee's Diſſ. p. 87. Dr. Allix ſuppoſed that the ſecond book of Eſdras was the production of a Jew who had adopted the opinions of Montanus: a rigid and enthuſiaſtic ſectary of the ſecond century, who predicted calamities and deſtruction to the Roman empire. Vid. Allix de Uſu & Præſtant. Num. Moſheim's Eccleſ. Hiſt. Cent. 2. Part II. § 23.

have

have borrowed more from this apocryphal book, than from almoſt any canonical book of the Old Teſtament, ſince in none except in the Pſalms can we diſcover ſuch frequent coincidence of thought and expreſſion [B]; and the author, indeed, treats ſo clearly of particulars brought to light by the Goſpel diſpenſation; pourtrays ſo expreſſively and

[B] Comp. chap. i. 30. with Matt. xxiii. 37. Chap. i. 32. with Matt. xxiii. 34. and Luke xi. 49, 50. where the evangeliſt refers probably to ſome prophecy now loſt. Chap. i. 33. with Luke xiii. 35, &c. Chap. i. 37. with John xx. 29. Chap. ii. 8, 9. with Mark vi. 11, &c. Chap. ii. 11. with Luke xvi. 9. Chap. ii. 12. with Matt. xi. 28. Chap. ii. 13. with Matt. vii. 7. and Matt. xxiv. 22, and chap. xxv. 34. and Mark xiii. 37. Chap. ii. 16. with John v. 28, 29. Chap. ii. 26. with John xvii. 12. Chap. iv. 21. with John iii. 31, 32. Chap. iv. 28. with Matt. xiii. 30. Chap. iv. 30. with Matt. xiii. 30, 39. Chap. iv. 31, 32. with Mark iv. 28, 29. Chap. v. 1. with Luke xviii. 8. Chap. v. 2. with Matt. xxiv. 12. Chap. v. 2, 3. with John xv. 1. Chap. vi. 23. with Matt. xxiv. 31. Chap. vi. 24. with Luke xii. 53. Chap. vi. 25. with Matt. xxiv. 13. Chap. vi. 26. with Matt. xiv. 28. Chap. vii. 7. with Matt. vii. 14. Chap. vii. 55. with Matt. xiii. 43. Chap. viii. 3. with Matt. xx. 16. and vii. 14. Chap. viii. 22. with John xvii. 17. Chap. ix. 3. Matt. xxiv. 6, 7. xiii. 32. with John vii. 19. Chap. ix. 37. with Matt. v. 18. Chap. xv. 4. with John iii. 36. and viii. 24. Chap. xvi. 18. with Matt. xxiv. 8. Chap. xvi. 53, 54, 76. with Luke xvi. 15. Chap. iii. 11. with 1 Pet. iii. 20. Chap. vii. 64. with 2 Pet. iii. 15. Chap. viii. 39. with 1 Pet. i. 17. Chap. viii. 59. with 2 Pet. iii. 9. Chap. ix. 15. with 1 Pet. iv. 18. and Matt. vii. 13. Chap. ii. 41. with 2 Theſſ. ii. 13. Comp. alſo, chap. v. 4. with Rev. viii. 10, 12. See, alſo, the book of Revelation paſſim, and many other collated references in Lee, p. 124—127.

cha-

characteriſtically our Saviour, who is imaged out, as "the Son of God, exalted on Mount Sion [c], crowning and giving palms to them who having confeſſed the name of God, had put off the mortal clothing;" deſcribing likewiſe the character and comprehenſive deſign of Chriſt's kingdom [d], and the death of our Saviour [e]; and ſpeaking ſo diſtinctly of a reſurrection and future judgment [f], that he muſt have been enlightened by divine inſpiration, if he had lived previouſly to the promulgation of the Goſpel doctrines.

THAT the book was written after the appearance of Chriſt, will be deemed farther probable if we conſider the particulars of that paſſage in which the author declares, in the name of the Almighty, that "Jeſus [g], his Son, ſhould be revealed with thoſe that be with

[c] Chap. ii. 34—36. comp. with John x. 11—14. and Matt. xi. 29. Eſd. ii. 42—48. comp. with Matt. x. 32. xvi. 16. Luke i. 35. 1 Pet. v. 4. and 1 Cor. xv. 53. Eſd. vii. 28. comp. with Luke i. 31. Eſd. xiii. 1—38. comp. with Matt. xxiv. 30. and xxv. 31. Vid. alſo, Eſd. xiv. 9. and xv. 6.

[d] Chap. ii. 34—41. Chap. ii. 18, 19. where, by the twelve trees and twelve fountains were deſigned, probably, the twelve apoſtles.

[e] Chap. vii. 29.

[f] Chap. ii. 16, 23, 31. iv. 42. vi. 20—28. vii. 31—35. comp. with John v. 25, 29. and Matt. xvi. 27. and xxv. 31. Vid. alſo, chap. vii. 42—45, 55. viii. 61. ix. 10—13. xiv. 35.

[g] Chap. vii. 28, 29. The name of Jeſus is wanting in the Arabic Paraphraſe; but it muſt have been in the ancient manuſcripts, as particularly in the Latin copies in the time of

with him; and that they that remain ſhould rejoice within four hundred years; that after theſe years ſhould his Son Chriſt die, and all men that have life;" for it is not probable that an uninſpired writer, however converſant with the prophetic books, ſhould have been able to etch out a prophecy ſo clear and deſcriptive.

THERE appears then to be ſome reaſon, on a collective conſideration of theſe circumſtances, to ſuppoſe that the book, or at leaſt that the greateſt part of it, was produced after the promulgation of the Goſpel. The work is, however, of too mixed and myſterious character to authorize any poſitive determination. It is a collection of pretended prophecies; cabaliſtical fancies; and alluſions to evangelical particulars. Amidſt ſpurious fabrications, and paſſages tranſcribed from the Goſpel, it may contain fragments of works written before the time of Chriſt [H]; and many writers have conſidered it as a com-

of St. Ambroſe, which was about 700 years prior to the ſuppoſed date of the Laudean manuſcript. This name, though ſynonimous with the word Redeemer, is no where applied to the Meſſiah in the Old Teſtament. Vid. Matt. i. 21. The word Chriſt is ſynonimous with that of the Meſſiah, or the Anointed; which words are often uſed by the Prophets in predictions reſpecting our Saviour. Vid. 1 Sam. ii. 35. Pſalm ii. 2. Dan. ix. 25. The Seventy in theſe places tranſlate *Maſhiach*, by Χριστὸς.

[H] Mr. Lee conceives the two firſt chapters to be an extrinſic work. He conſiders them as a fragment of ſome book held ſacred among the Egyptian Jews, though not admitted into the canon. They are not in the Arabic verſion, nor in ſome of the moſt ancient Latin copies. Lee's Diſſ. p. 54.

pilation

pilation of pieces, of which ſome, at leaſt, may have been the genuine production of Ezra.

Among the various opinions that have been entertained concerning this book, ſome have imagined that it might have been compoſed ſoon after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, by a Chriſtian writer; who, as was cuſtomary among the ancients, might have aſſumed a borrowed title, not with intention to impoſe on the world: but to exhibit under the name of Ezra, as that of a great doctor of the Law, a ſpecimen of what might be ſaid on the principles of the Jewiſh ſynagogue, concerning the more inward and ſpiritual religion that had been concealed from common obſervation under the veil of Moſes; and that the author might deſign to develop the more ſecret wiſdom of God in his government of the world, and of his church; with the more notable events relative to the introduction and eſtabliſhment of the kingdom of the Meſſiah, in order to facilitate the reception of the Goſpel and its myſteries.

It is probable, that the author's intention was to promote the ſucceſs of Chriſtianity; and Calmet has conjectured, that he lived during the time of ſome perſecution of the Chriſtians, whom he appears deſirous of exciting to faith and fortitude [1]. But however pious the deſign of the author, it will not apologize for the guilt of endeavouring to impoſe a ſpurious, for an inſpired work on the world; and for the preſumption of ſpeaking in the name and with the

[1] Chap. ii. 44—47.

authority

authority of God. The work, however, may be admired as a production of the moſt curious and intereſting character; as valuable for many devout and inſtructive ſentiments, and for precepts modelled on the perfection of chriſtian morality [K]. It may be admired, likewiſe, for the beauties of its compoſition: for its lively and elegant illuſtrations, and for that majeſtic eloquence which breaks forth through the diſadvantages of a barbarous Latin tranſlation. The Romiſh church, though it admit not its canonical authority, has adopted ſome paſſages from it into its offices [L]; and it is properly ſuffered to continue in our Bibles as a profitable book if diſcreetly and cautiouſly uſed, but not as having any authority in point of doctrine. It may be obſerved, however, in vindication of the book, even in that reſpect, at leaſt in one inſtance, that the Roman Catholics who have endeavoured to countenance the notions of purgatory by the authority of this writer, have perverted his words; for the paſſage in which he ſpeaks, agreeably to the repreſentation of St. John [M], of the ſouls of the righteous, as ſet apart in expectation of God's final judgment, makes no mention of purification, or of their being placed in a ſtate of expiatory puniſhment.

CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS has quoted [N] in his

[K] Chap. ii. 20—23. iv. 7.

[L] 2 Eſdras ii. 36, 37. Miſſa in Fer. poſt Pentacoſtem. Miſſ. Rom. p. 316.

[M] Chap. iv. 35—41. comp. with Rev. vi. 9—11.

[N] Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. I. p. 330.

explication

explication of Daniel's prophecy, a paſſage as from the book of Eſdras, which is no longer to be found in this or the preceding book; if it ever exiſted in this, it muſt have tended ſtill farther to prove that it was written after the appearance of Chriſt. The words of Clemens may be thus rendered: "For it is written in Eſdras, and thus the Meſſiah, the Prince, the King of the Jews, was in Jeruſalem, after the accompliſhment of the ſeven weeks; and in the ſixty-two weeks all Judæa was in peace, and was without wars; and the Lord our Chriſt, the moſt Holy, being come, and having fulfilled the viſion and prophecy, (Prophet) was anointed in the fleſh, by the Spirit of his Father."

OF THE

BOOK OF TOBIT.

THIS Book was probably written by, or at leaſt compiled from the memoirs of Tobit and Tobias [A]: whom Raphael, the angel, had commanded to record the events of their lives [B]. The work appears to have been begun by Tobit; who in the Greek, Hebrew, and Syriac editions, ſpeaks in the firſt perſon to the fourth chapter; and by whom other parts in the book, as the prayer in the thirteenth chapter, are ſaid to have been written; what he left unfiniſhed was probably completed by his ſon; the two laſt verſes of the book being afterwards added by ſome compiler [C], who digeſted the materials into their preſent form.

[A] The Greek calls the father Τωβητ (Tobet) or Τωβιτ (Tobit) and the ſon Τωβιας (Tobias) in the Chaldee both are called טוביה (Tobija).

[B] Chap. xii. 20.

[C] It is called βιβλος των λογων, "The Book of the Words" or of the acts of Tobit, ch. i. 1.

IT

It is uncertain, whether this work were originally written in the Hebrew or in the Chaldaic language [D], with both of which Tobit and his family muſt have been well acquainted. The Hebrew copies publiſhed by Munſter and Fagius, appear to be tranſlations comparatively modern [E]; and as the book was extant in the Chaldaic language in the time of St. Jerom, it is poſſible that it was originally written in that language, though no Chaldaic copy be now extant. The moſt ancient copy that is known to exiſt, is a Greek verſion which was probably made by ſome Helleniſtical Jew [F], and before the time of Theodoſion, as it is quoted by Polycarp [G];

[D] Origen profeſſes to have heard that the Jews had Tobit and Judith in their language among the apocryphal books. Vid. Epiſt. ad African. but he probably meant in the Chaldaic language, which is ſometimes called the Hebrew. The names of the angels, and of the months, are of Chaldæan derivation; but theſe might have been equally uſed by a Jew, as the Chaldæan expreſſions and reckonings were generally adopted during and after the captivity by the Jews. Vid. Bereſchit. Rabb. & Talmud Hier. Huet. Dem. Evan. Prop. 4.

[E] The Hebrew obtained by Fagius from Conſtantinople, and publiſhed by him, ſeems to have been tranſlated from the Greek; that of Munſter, which he profeſſes to have found in Germany, was probably rendered chiefly from the Vulgate. They both, however, vary from the copies from which they are ſuppoſed to have been reſpectively tranſlated. Huet was in poſſeſſion of an Hebrew manuſcript, which differed from both; and eſpecially from that of Fagius. Vid. Fabric. Bib. Græc. Huet. Prop. 4. & Calmet. Pref. ſur Tobie.

[F] Hieron. Præf. in Tobiam, & Whiſton's Sac. Hiſt. vol. i.

[G] Polycarp. Epiſt. ad Philip. This Greek tranſlation was compoſed, however, long after the period aſſigned to the

from this our Engliſh tranſlation, and probably the Syriac verſion was made: as alſo the Latin verſion, which was in uſe before the time of St. Jerom.

All the verſions of this book vary ſo much from each other, that they muſt have ſuffered many corruptions. St. Jerom's Latin verſion eſpecially, which he profeſſes to have tranſlated from the Chaldee, differs ſo much from the Greek, that it has been ſuppoſed to have been drawn from a more extended hiſtory of Tobit [H]. But if we conſider, that St. Jerom was at that time by his own account ignorant of the Chaldee, and that he executed the work by the aſſiſtance of a Jew in one day [I], we may attribute many of the adventitious particulars to inaccuracy, and to the redundancies that muſt have reſulted from verbal circumlocution. The Greek is probably moſt entitled to reſpect, and on that account it was preferred by the tranſlators of our Bible [K]; and, indeed, there are ſome miſtakes in the

hiſtory, for the ſixth verſe of the eighth chapter is tranſcribed almoſt *verbatim* from the Septuagint verſion of Gen. ii. 18.

[H] Fabian Juſtiniani ſuppoſed that there muſt have been two originals; and Serarius contends for three. But the varieties ariſe from corruptions in the copies. Vid. Juſtin. Præf. in Tob. He mentions an Arabic verſion which correſponds much with the Vulgate, and which was probably made from it.

[I] "Unius Diei laborem arripui, & quicquid ille mihi Hebraicis verbis expreſſit, hoc ego accito notario ſermonibus Latinis expoſui," ſays St. Jerom, vid. Præf. in Tobiam. We are not therefore to look for accuracy in a tranſlation ſo made.

[K] Coverdale's tranſlation appears to have been made from that of St. Jerom, altered as in the Vulgate.

Latin,

Latin, which if not rejected, would entirely deſtroy all the authority which the book may claim, and make it utterly inconſiſtent with the times to which it is aſſigned. This, however, is canonized by the church of Rome.

THE book, if it ever exiſted in the Hebrew language, was certainly never in the Hebrew canon, and has no pretenſions to be conſidered as the production of an inſpired writer. It was probably compoſed after the cloſing of the canon; but perhaps before the time of our Saviour, though as far as may be argued from the ſilence of Philo and Joſephus, it does not ſeem to have been known to thoſe hiſtorians, and it is not cited in the New Teſtament. It is not to be found in the moſt ancient catalogues of the canonical books, as furniſhed by Melito; Origen; and the Council of Laodicea; and it muſt be added, that Athanaſius [L], Cyril of Jeruſalem [M], Gregory Nazianzen [N], Epiphanius [O], Hilary [P], and St. Jerom [Q], exclude it from the ſacred code.

THOUGH Tobit has no canonical authority, it is a book reſpectable for its antiquity and contents. In the Alexandrian manuſcript, and in the beſt editions of the Septuagint, it is placed among the hagiogra-

[L] Athan. Epiſt. feſtal. & in Synop.
[M] Cyrill. Catech. 4.
[N] Greg. Nazianz. Carm. de Veris Scrip.
[O] Epiphan. de Pond. & Menſ.
[P] Hil. in Prolog. Pſalm.
[Q] Hieron. Prol. Gal. Præf. in Tob. in Prov. &c. paſſim.

phical books; and it is cited from the Greek with great reſpect by Polycarp [R], Clemens Alexandrinus [S], Chryſoſtom, and other writers [T] of conſiderable authority; and ſome Councils, indeed, as thoſe of Carthage [U], Florence, and Trent [X], eſteemed it canonical; upon an erroneous notion of its being dictated by inſpiration, and upon a ſuppoſition that it was claſſed by the Jews among the Hagiographa as a work of ſecondary rank [Y].

HOUBIGANT imagines, that the only reaſon why it was not admitted into the canon was, becauſe being a private hiſtory, there were probably but few copies; and that theſe being kept at Ecbatana in Media,

[R] Polycarp. Epiſt. ad Philipp.

[S] Clemen. Alex. Strom. I.

[T] Clem. Conſtit. Apoſt. Lib. I. c. i. Lib. III. c. xv. Lib. VII. c. ii. Irenæus Inſinuat. Lib. I. c. xxx. Cyprian. paſſim. Auguſt. de Doct. Chriſt. Lib. III. c. xviii. Ambroſ. Lib. de Tobia. Hilar. in Pſalm cxxix. n. 7. Baſil. Homil. de Avarit.

[U] Concil. Carthag. III. An. 397. c. xlvii. alſo Concil. Hippon. A. 393, Can. 38. Vid. alſo, P. Innocent I. Epiſt. 3. ad Exuper. & Coſin's Schol. Hiſt. § 83.

[X] Concil. Trid. Seſſ. 4.

[Y] Hieron. Prol. Gal. Præf. in Proverb. & in Tobit. In the preſent copies of this laſt preface, St. Jerom is repreſented to have ſaid that the Jews reckoned Tobit among the Hagiographa; but the word Hagiographa is probably, as many of the Romaniſts allow, a corruption, and ſubſtituted for Apocrypha. Thoſe, however, who contend for the authenticity of the expreſſion, muſt at leaſt admit, that Hagiographa is uſed only in an inferior ſenſe; for St. Jerom in the ſame place affirms, that the Jews excluded it from the catalogue of the divine writings, and cenſured him for tranſlating a book not in their canon. Vid. Coſin's Schol. Hiſt. § 73. p. 83.

where

where Tobias retired, the work though then written, might not have been known to Ezra: but, indeed, if it had been then written, and known to the compiler of the canon, it could have had no title to be claſſed among the canonical books as of the ſame authority with them. The author does not pretend to propheſy himſelf; but collects only what had been delivered by the Prophets [z]: deſcribing the fate of Nineveh [A]; the diſperſion of his countrymen; the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and of the temple, in the ſame manner that Jonah and other Prophets had foretold them.

THERE are no circumſtances mentioned in this book which are inconſiſtent with the period in which Tobit is related to have lived [B]; nor is there any internal objection to the ſuppoſition of its being compiled ſoon after the events therein deſcribed, or at leaſt before the time of Chriſt. In the Vulgate, indeed, the temple of Jeruſalem is ſpoken of as already burnt [c]; and it has been ſuppoſed that part of

[z] Chap. xiv. 4, 5.

[A] Grotius thinks that Jonas is inſerted in chap. xiv. 4, 8. by miſtake for Nahum. But Jonah's prophecy, in ch. iii. 4. of his book, may be ſuppoſed to include the deſtruction of Nineveh by the Medes and Babylonians. Its accompliſhment was protracted but not fruſtrated.

[B] It ſhould be remarked, that Nebuchodonoſor, mentioned in chap. xiv. 15. was Nabopolaſſar. Vid. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XVIII. c. xi. comp. with Lib. I. cont. Apion. & Juchaſin. fol. 136. Aſſuerus was Aſtyages, or his ſon, the Cyaxares of Herodotus. Nineveh was taken A. M. 3392. Vid. Prid. An. 612. Preface to Nahum, p. 474.

[c] Chap. xiv. 7. and xiii. 11. Vulgate.

Tobit's prophetic aſſurance was drawn from the writings of Jeremiah; but as in the Greek verſion from which our tranſlation is made, that deſtruction is ſpoken of prophetically [D] as yet to happen; and as all the predictions which are here inſerted might have been drawn from Prophets who preceded his time, there is no reaſon to diſpute the antiquity aſcribed to Tobit, or to his book [E]. From the ſame ſacred ſource of the earlier Prophets, might have been derived thoſe predictions which Tobit records relative to the calling of the Gentiles [F]; and the reſtoration of Jeruſalem to a magnificence prefigurative of its future ſpiritual glory in the eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian church [G].

With reſpect to the hiſtory contained in this book, there is no reaſon to queſtion its truth, at

[D] Chap. xiv. 4. drawn perhaps from Micah iii. 12.

[E] Aman, mentioned in chap. xiv. 10. was not Haman the proud enemy of Mordecai and the Jews, mentioned in the book of Eſther, nor Judith's huſband, but ſome predeceſſor or contemporary of Tobit, with whoſe hiſtory we are unacquainted.

[F] Chap. xiii. 11. which perhaps alludes to the offering of the wiſe men, deſcribed in St. Matt. ii. 11. The prediction may be drawn from David's prophecy in Pſalm lxxii. 10. of which the very words are introduced in the Hebrew copy publiſhed by Fagius. See alſo chap. xiv. 6, 7. which might be grounded on the prophecies in Micah v. 12, 14. Iſaiah ii. 18. xxxi. 7. Zechar. xiii. 2, &c.

[G] Chap. xiii. 16—18. xiv. 5—8. which figurative paſſages reſemble ſome metaphorical deſcriptions of St. John. Vid. Rev. xxi. 10—27. xxii. 3—6, but which were probably borrowed from Iſaiah liv. 11—17.

leaſt

leaſt as to the main particulars; and the Jews do not appear to have entertained any doubts on the ſubject [H]. It is written with much ſimplicity, and with an air of verity. The characters are deſcribed with great ſincerity and effect; and the minute detail of genealogy, of time, place, and perſonal circumſtances [I], while they heighten the intereſt, tend to demonſtrate the truth and reality of the relation. Tobit, then, is to be conſidered as a real character; he was born probably during the reign of Ahaz; he was of the tribe of Nephthali, in the city of Thiſbe [K], in Upper Galilee; he was carried captive to Nineveh

[H] Juchaſin. Hierom. ad Chron. & Heliod. Grot. Præf. ad Tob. Sixt. Senens. Bib. Lib. VIII.

[I] Chap. v. 16. The mention of Tobias's dog has been frequently repreſented as a ludicrous and unneceſſary particular. But there is often as much want of taſte as of candour in criticiſm of this nature. The introduction of ſuch incidental particulars is not unuſual in the moſt admired works of antiquity. Vid. Odyſſ. Lib. II. l. 11. Æneid. Lib. VIII. l. 463. It deſerves to be remarked, that in the eleventh chapter of the Vulgate, the dog is ſaid to have firſt appeared as the harbinger of the ſon's return; and the Syriac verſion repreſents Anna to have firſt perceived the dog; and indeed, the Greek has been thought to intimate nearly as much, for it ſays, not that ſhe ſaw Tobias himſelf, but προσενοησεν αυτον ερχομενον, "perceived that he was coming," as poſſibly by the dog. In this there is nothing low or ridiculous, but an incident familiar and elegant. Comp. with Odyſſ. Lib. XVII. l. 301, 302.

[K] Thiſbe was at the right hand (that is, to the ſouth; for the Jews in the deſcription of places, ſuppoſe the ſpeaker to face the eaſt) of Kadeſh. Nepthali (Κυδιως or κυριως, or

Nineveh after the extinction of the kingdom of Iſrael, by Enemaſſar, or Salmaneſſer, about A. M. 3283 [L].

THE hiſtory of this captive, and of his family, is here related in a very intereſting manner; it is enlivened with much variety of incident, and decorated by the diſplay of many virtues. Some of the incidents, as the miniſtry of the angel; the influence and defeat of the evil ſpirit; as well as the blindneſs and recovery of Tobit, have appeared ſo improbable to many writers, that they have choſen to conſider the whole book merely as an inſtructive fiction [M], deſigned to illuſtrate the relative and ſocial charities of life, and to exhibit a pattern of virtue exerciſed in trials, and recompenſed in this world; but there are no phyſical objections to the cauſes aſſigned either for the deprivation [N] or reſtoration

καδιως της Νεφθαλι) the ſame place, perhaps, with Cades, the capital of Nephtali, and poſſibly the Cadytes of Herodotus. It was one of the three cities of refuge on the weſt ſide of the Jordan. The Vulgate repreſents Tobit to have been born at Nepthali. Vid. Calmet and Arnald on the place.

[L] The tribe of Nepthali in general had been carried into captivity about twenty years before by Tiglath-Pileſer. Vid. 2 Kings xv. 29. The year of Tobit's death is uncertain; all the copies differ. The Vulgate ſuppoſes him to have lived 102 years; the Greek 158. Both accounts are erroneous.

[M] Paul Fagius. It has been compared to the Cyropædia of Xenophon, and the Telemachus of Fenelon.

[N] Chap. ii. 10. Tobit appears to have ſlept in a court-yard, becauſe polluted by the dead body which he had buried, and his eyes might have been open habitually, or from accident

tion [o] of ſight to Tobit, or if they are not naturally capable of producing ſuch effects, they might ſtill be miraculouſly rendered inſtruments in the hands of Providence.

With reſpect to the agency of the angels, there is nothing inconſiſtent with reaſon, received opinions [p], or ſcripture, in ſuppoſing a limited ſuperintendence of ſuperior beings. We know, indeed, that under the peculiar circumſtances of the Jewiſh œconomy, the miniſtry of angels was manifeſtly employed in ſubſerviency to God's deſigns; and that particular perſonages were occaſionally favoured with

cident. The excrement of ſparrows (ſwallows) is hot and acrimonious. Vid. Plinii Lib. XI. c. xxxvii. Geſner Hiſt. Animal. Lib. III. and may cauſe blindneſs.

[o] It is uncertain of what ſpecies was the fiſh mentioned in this book. The gall of the fiſh called Callionimus is efficacious in removing ſpecks and obſtructions of the ſight. Vid. Galen de Simplic. Medicam. Facult. Lib. X. c. xii. Ælian Lib. XIII. c. iv. Plin. L. XXVIII. c. xi. Aldrovand. Ornithol. L. XVII. Vales de Sac. Philoſoph. But this fiſh appears to be too ſmall to correſpond with the deſcription of that of Tobit. Bochart contends for the Silurus, the ſheat-fiſh, or ſturgeon, called alſo, the Glanis. This the naturaliſts deſcribe as large and voracious. Vid. Ray and Johnſton. And its liver was famous for removing ſuffuſions and dimneſs. Vid. Houbigant. But it is objected that this fiſh, as having no ſcales, could not be eaten conſiſtently with the reſtrictions of the Levitical Law. Vid. Lev. xi. 10, 11. The livers of many other fiſhes may have the ſame ſanative qualities.

[p] Heſiod Oper. & Dies, Lib. I. Plato de Legibus, Lib. X. Apulæus de Deo Sacratis. Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. c. x. Orphei Hymn ad Muſ. Plutarch in Brut. Acts xii. 15. Barnab. Epiſt. c. xviii.

their

their familiar intercourſe. It is likewiſe unqueſtionable, that before the power and malevolence of evil ſpirits were checked and reſtricted by the control of our Saviour, their open influence was experienced [Q]; and though in the accounts of this book, inviſible beings be repreſented as endued with corporeal affections, and deſcribed under traditionary names of Chaldæan extraction; and though the whole hiſtory of their proceedings as here furniſhed, be in ſome meaſure accommodated to vulgar conceptions [R]; yet it would be a violation of all juſt rules of criticiſm, to conſider the agency of theſe beings as a mere allegorical machinery. Indeed, the events recorded are ſo dependent on their ſuppoſed interference; and the miraculous circumſtances are ſo incorporated with the hiſtory, that the truth of the whole account reſts on the ſame foundation, and the particular parts cannot be ſeparately removed.

[Q] Luke xiii. 16. 1 Pet. v. 8. Rev. xx. 1—3.

[R] Chap. vi. 17. viii. 2, 3. The ſuppoſed effect of fumigation on demons was agreeable to vulgar notions. Vid. Joſeph. de Bell. Jud. Lib. VIII. c. ii. The perfume was rendered efficacious by faith, prayer, and continence; vid. Matt. xvii. 21. and the burning of the entrails of the fiſh was enjoined rather as a ſign and intimation, than as a phyſical cauſe of the defeat of the evil ſpirit, as in John ix. 6. We reaſon, however, upon preconceived conjectural notions, when we aſſert, that devils cannot be affected by the operation of ſmells. The flight of the evil ſpirit, and his being bound by Raphael, implies only that he was circumſcribed and reſtricted in his power by an expulſion to the ſuppoſed ſphere of demons. Vid. Luke viii. 29. Matt. xii. 43. Hieron. in Hierem. c. xxviii.

STILL.

STILL, however, thoſe who conſider the whole book as a moral invention deſigned for the particular conſolation of the Jews in captivity; or for their general inſtruction and encouragement in affliction; may derive the ſame profit from that fine ſpirit of piety and benevolence which breathes through every part of the book [s]; and which occaſionally breaks out into thoſe beautiful ſentiments that have been imitated by ſucceeding writers, and copied out into the Liturgy of our church [t]; and which ſometimes approach even the refined precepts of Chriſtianity [u].

IN the old Roman Miſſal, and in the Miſſal of Sarum, there is a proper maſs of Raphael the archangel; and in the prefatory rubrick it is directed, that the office be celebrated for pilgrims or travellers, as alſo for ſick perſons and dæmoniacs [x]; upon notions of the archangel's character, built on the relations of this book. Afterwards follow two ſhort prayers, one addreſſed to God, and one to Raphael himſelf.

[s] Chap. iii. viii. xiii.

[t] Tobit iv. 7, 8, 9. and the Communion Service.

[u] Chap. iv. 7. comp. with Luke xi. 41. Chap. iv. 15. with Matt. vii. 12. and Luke vi. 31. Chap. iv. 16. with Luke xiv. 13. Chap. iv. 8, 9. comp. with 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19.

[x] Arnald's Diſſ. on the Demon. Aſmodæus.

OF THE

BOOK OF JUDITH.

THE author, and the period of this hiſtory, are both uncertain [A]. Some commentators imagine that it was written by Joacim or Eliakim, whom they conceive to have been high-prieſt in the reign of Manaſſeth [B]; and that it was tranſlated into Chaldee for the uſe of thoſe Jews in the captivity at Babylon, who had forgotten their own language. Others attribute the work to Joſhua, the ſon of Joſedech [C], the companion of Zerubbabel. But by whomſoever, or in whatever language it was produced, the original is not now extant. The Hebrew copy, which ſome have profeſſed to have ſeen at Conſtantinople [D], was probably a work of

[A] Iſidor. Orig. Lib. VI. c. 2. Serar. Prolog. in Jud. St. Jerom ſeems to conſider it as the production of Judith. Vid. in Agg. i. 6.

[B] Chap. iv. 6.

[C] Pſeudo-Philo. Lib. de Temp. R. Aſarias, Sixt. Senens, Jul. Roger. de Lib. Can. c. xx.

[D] Lib. Munſter. Præf. in Tob. Hebræum.

modern

modern compoſition; and our Engliſh tranſlation, as well as the Syriac, is made from a Greek verſion which exiſted probably long before the time of Theodotion, as it ſeems to have been known to Clemens Romanus [E]. The moſt probable opinion is, that the book was originally written in Chaldee [F] by ſome Jew of Babylon; and it might poſſibly have been deſigned to enliven the confidence of the Jews during the captivity, and to invigorate their hopes of a deliverance.

Upon a ſuppoſition of the truth of the hiſtory, the circumſtances deſcribed muſt have occurred previouſly to the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, ſince the Perſians are repreſented as ſtill ſubject to the Aſſyrian empire [G]; and Nineveh, which is here mentioned as the capital of Nebuchodonoſor's empire [H], was overthrown before that deſtruction; and upon the impending invaſion of Holophernes, the Jews are ſaid in this book to have been troubled "for the city and temple of their God." Uſher, therefore, Lloyd, and Prideaux, have agreed on conſidering the hiſtory as coeval with the time of Manaſſeth [I]: placing

[E] Clemens Rom. Epiſt. ad Corinth. c. lv. Vid. alſo, Polycarp. & Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. I.

[F] Hieron. Præf. in Lib. Jud.

[G] Chap. i. 7—10.

[H] Chap. i. 1.

[I] Some place it in the reign of Amon, or in that of Joſiah, and others contend for the time of Jehoiakim. Some writers who place it in the reign of Zedekiah, conceive that Nebuchodonoſer was the ſame perſon with Nebuchadnezzar; upon which

placing it in about the forty-fourth year of his reign, A. M. 3348. And Prideaux, with other writers, after a judicious inveſtigation of the ſeveral opinions that have been entertained upon the ſubject [K], maintains that the Arphaxad of this book was Deioces [L]; and Nebuchodonoſor, Saoſduchinus, who af-

which ſuppoſition, Jeruſalem muſt have been taken in the ſame year that Bethulia was beſieged, if we follow the accounts of the Greek copies of this book, which place the expedition of Holophernes in the eighteenth year of Nebuchodonoſor's reign; for the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar coincides with the ninth year of Zedekiah.

[K] The ancient tradition among the Jews was, that the circumſtances of the hiſtory happened under the reign of Cambyſes. Vid. Euſeb. Chron. Hiſt. Scholaſt. Dyoniſ. Carthus. Suidas Verbo Holophernes. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xvi. But the capital of Cambyſes was Babylon, and he reigned but ſeven years and three months. Vid. Herod. Lib. III. cap. lxvi. Others place the hiſtory in the time of Xerxes. Vid. Suidas Verbo Judith. Riber. in Nahum ii. Eſtius and others place it in the time of Darius Hyſtaſpes; and Sulpicius Severus aſſigns to it a ſtill later period, placing it under the reign of Artaxerxes Ochus, King of Perſia. Vid. Hiſt. Sac. Lib. II. Bellarm. de Verb. Dei, Lib. I. c. xii.

[L] Deioces founded Ecbatana; and the beginning of the twelfth year of Saoſduchinus, coincides with the laſt year of Deioces. Theſe and other concurrent circumſtances ſeem to prove, that Deioces and Arphaxad muſt have been the ſame perſon; though ſome writers relate that Deioces lived long, and died old, in proſperity. Calmet ſuppoſes Arphaxad to be the Phraortes of Herodotus, the circumſtances of whoſe life and death, as he conceives, correſpond better with the accounts of this book, and who may be ſuppoſed to have finiſhed the fortifications of Ecbatana, as deſcribed in chap. i. 2—4. Vid. Herod. Lib. I.

cended

cended the throne of Babylon, A. M. 3336; and the learned author places the expedition of Holophernes in A. M. 3349: making the twelfth year of Saoſduchinus to coincide with the forty-fifth of Manaſſeth [M].

But though the hiſtory cannot with conſiſtency be aſſigned to any other time than that of Manaſſeth [N], there are ſtill ſo many objections to this period, that many writers have choſen to conſider the whole work as a religious romance. It muſt be confeſſed, indeed, to be extraordinary, that neither Philo nor Joſephus ſhould make any mention of this ſignal deliverance; for the latter eſpecially, though he pro-

[M] Prid. Con. vol. i. Part I. p. 36. Calmet's Preface, Bellarm. de Verb. Dei, Lib. I. c. xii.

[N] Manaſſeth himſelf is not mentioned in this book, (nor, indeed, any King,) whence ſome have ſuppoſed that the ſiege of Bethulia happened during his captivity at Babylon; or that he was withheld from an active part from cautious or prudential conſiderations; or laſtly, that he was then engaged in ſequeſtered repentance. But as Bethulia was on the frontiers, the defence of it might have been entruſted to the high-prieſt. The preciſe ſituation of Bethulia is not known; ſome place it in the territory of Zabulon, in which there appears to have been a town of that name, but Judith, Manaſſeth, and Onias were of the tribe of Simeon. There might have been a frontier town in the hilly country of Simeon, towards Syria, named Bethulia, though we have no other mention of it in hiſtory. We cannot, however, ſuppoſe it to have been the ſame place with Bethel, or Bethuel, mentioned in Joſhua xix. 4. and 1 Chron. iv. 30. without allowing that the author has been guilty of ſome geographical miſtakes. Vid. chap. iii. 9, 10. and iv. 6. Calmet in chap. vi. 7. and Arnald in chap. vi. 10.

feſſed

feſſed to confine himſelf to ſuch accounts as were contained in the Hebrew, (that is, the authentic canonical) books [o], yet by no means adheres ſo ſtrictly to his plan that he might not have been expected to have mentioned ſo remarkable an interpoſition of God in favour of his country; but as this omiſſion can only furniſh a preſumptive argument againſt the truth of the hiſtory; and as the apparent inconſiſtencies may be accounted for without deſtroying the credibility of the chief particulars; it is more reaſonable to conſider it as the hiſtory of real events [p]: ſince many of its circumſtances correſpond with the accounts of Herodotus [q]; and the Jews as well as the earlier Chriſtians, believed it to be a relation of hiſtorical truths.

MANY alſo, of the difficulties which occur in conſidering the hiſtory; and many of the objections to the period which is aſſigned to it, are to be attributed to corruptions that have taken place in the Greek verſion [r]; and which are among the inconſiſtencies

[o] Proœm. Antiq. & Lib. X. c. xi.

[p] Mountfauçon Verité de l'Hiſtoire de Judith. Howel's Hiſt. of Bible, ch. clxxiv. Houbigant Præf. & Notes. Herod. Lib. I. c. ii.

[q] Nebuchodonoſor is ſtiled Saoſduchinus by Herodotus and Ptolemy. Nebuchodonoſor was, indeed, properly the name of the Babylonian Kings; but the Jews ſeem to have called all the princes who reigned beyond the Euphrates by that name, as in Tobit, Nabopolaſſar is ſo called. Vid. Tobit xiv. 15.

[r] The third verſe of the fourth chapter repreſents the Jews as newly returned from the captivity; but this is not in St. Jerom's

conſiſtencies that St. Jerom profeſſes to have lopped off as ſpurious when he made his tranſlation, which is now extant in the Vulgate [s]. Some originate in the obſcurity that neceſſarily hangs over a period ſo diſtant, and ſo little illuſtrated by the remains of ancient hiſtory [t]; and ſome muſt be charged probably on the ignorance of the author, who compiled the book from ſuch materials as he could procure; and who, to give importance to his hiſtory, and to

St. Jerom's verſion. So likewiſe, the words in the eighteenth verſe of the fifth chapter, which ſpeaks of the temple as being caſt to the ground, are reſcinded as a corruption by St. Jerom; though the original Greek words, ἐγενήθη εἰς ἐδαφος, might mean only that the temple was prophaned and trampled on; as it was at ſeveral times, and, perhaps, by the Aſſyrians, when Manaſſeth was taken priſoner. The captivities and diſperſion ſpoken of both in the Greek and Latin, may be underſtood of the Aſſyrian captivities under Manaſſeth. Vid. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11—13.

[s] Chap. i. 13. which differs five years from the date given in chap. i. 1. In St. Jerom's verſion there is no apparent inconſiſtency. In chap. ii. 1. the eighteenth year is placed in conſequence of the ſame calculation, inſtead of the thirteenth, as it ſtands in St. Jerom's verſion. It is, however, poſſible, that there is no miſtake, and that five years might have intervened between the preparations for war, and the attack on Arphaxad.

[t] Joacim, or Eliakim, is repreſented in this book as high-prieſt, though no high-prieſt of that name is mentioned before the captivity by Joſephus, or in the ſcriptures, unleſs we attribute that character to the Eliakim ſpoken of by Iſaiah, ch. xxii. 20—25. But the catalogue of Joſephus is corrupted, and the ſcriptures no where profeſs to furniſh an exact ſucceſſion of the Prieſts. Vid. Prid. Con. vol. i. Part I. p. 39.

magnify the characters which he describes, has embellished his history, sometimes at the expence of chronology and truth [u].

If these causes of inconsistency be admitted, there will be no necessity to question the truth of the principal circumstances in this history; and to have recourse to such imaginations as Grotius [x] and others have entertained: who have amused themselves by considering it as an instructive fiction, or ingenious allegory: in speculations they may serve to prove the fertility of their invention, but which conduce but

[u] It is said in chap. xvi. 23. that none made Israel afraid in the days of Judith, nor a long time after her death. Now as we cannot suppose her to have been more than forty years old when she captivated Holophernes; (probably not so old, especially as she is called fair damsel, Καλη παιδισκη, chap. xii. 13.) and as she lived to the age of 105, there must have been a sixty years peace at least after the deliverance; which was a longer space of time than intervened between the forty-fifth year of Manasseth, and the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, (not to mention the dangers under Josiah, and the defeat and death of that monarch); or, indeed, than any period of uninterrupted peace in the course of the Jewish history. We must therefore suppose the author to have spoken hyperbolically of the effects of Judith's heroism.

[x] Grot. Præf. ad Annot. in Lib. Jud. Grotius fancies that it is a parabolical, or ænigmatic fiction, written in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, to encourage the Jews under the persecution carried on by him. He imagines that Judith is Judæa; Bethulia the house of God; and that by Nebuchodonosor and Holophernes, are meant the devil and his agent, and has other whimsical conceits to explain this supposed allegory. Vid. similar notions in Luther, Reiniccius, and Capellus. Limborchi, Theolog. Lib. I. cap. iii. p. 9.

little

little to illuſtrate truth; or to increaſe our reverence for works reſpectable, at leaſt, for their antiquity and functions; and valuable for the inſtruction which they afford. It may be obſerved alſo, as an intrinſic mark of the truth of this hiſtory, that the author appears to ſpeak of Achior's family as living at the time when the book was written [y], and that in the laſt verſe of the Vulgate, it is ſaid, that the day of Judith's triumph had ever ſince been celebrated as a ſacred feſtival [z].

It appears from the accounts of Origen [A], and St. Jerom [B], that the Jews reckoned this book among their apocryphal writings. It is no where cited by our Saviour or his apoſtles [c]; it is not in the catalogues furniſhed by Melito, Origen, and

[y] Chap. xiv. 10.

[z] Chap. xvi. 31. Vulgate. This verſe is not in the Greek, Syriac, or ancient Latin verſions, nor is the feſtival mentioned in any authentic Hebrew calendars. Some writers, however, ſuppoſe that it was anciently obſerved. Vid. Selden de Synedr. Lib. III. c. xiii. Scaliger de Emend. Temp. Lib. VII. p. 633, & Calmet in loc.

[A] Epiſt. ad African.

[B] Hieron. Præf. in Jud. Some manuſcripts of St. Jerom read improperly Hagiographa. Vid. Preface to Tobit, p. 251, note y.

[c] There is a reſemblance between Elizabeth's ſalutation of Mary, in Luke i. 42. and the encomium beſtowed on Judith by Ozias, in chap. xiii. 18. of this book; as likewiſe between the exhortation of St. Paul, and a paſſage in chap. viii. 24, 25. of the Vulgate copy of Judith. The coincidence of expreſſion is probably accidental in both parallels. St. Paul in the laſt alludes to the circumſtances mentioned in Numb. xxi. 6. and xiv. 37.

Athanaſius, nor was it received by Hilary, Gregory Nazianzen, Cyril of Jeruſalem, or the Council of Laodicea; but being cited with reſpect by many ancient writers [D]; and conſidered as canonical in a ſecondary ſenſe by St. Auſtin [E], and the African church [F], it was received indiſcriminately, and as of the ſame authority with the inſpired books by the Council of Trent [G], which canonized St. Jerom's tranſlation; and ſince that time it has been generally

[D] Clem. Epiſt. ad Corinth. c. lv. Clem. Conſtit. Apoſt. Origen. Homil. xix. in Jerem. ad Lib. III. in Johan. Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. IV. Tertull. de Monog. c. xvii. Ambroſ. de Offic. Lib. III. & de Vid. Auguſt. de Doct. Chriſt. Lib. II. c. viii.

[E] St. Auſtin expreſsly remarks, that this book was ſaid not to have been admitted into the Hebrew canon. Vid. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxvi.

[F] Concil. Carthag. 3. Canon 47. See alſo, the ſuſpected epiſtle of Pope Innocent I. where the books of Tobit, Judith, and Maccabees, are reckoned as ſcripture.

[G] Some controverſialiſts have aſſerted, that St. Jerom allowed that the book of Judith was canonized by the Council of Nice. Vid. Bellar. de V. Dei, Lib. I. c. x. Baron. Annal. tom. iii. Ann. 325. ſect. 157. But in the acts of this council, the book is not mentioned; and in the place referred to, (vid. Hieron. Præf. in Judith) St. Jerom only ſays, that the Council of Nice was *reported* (legitur) to have reckoned this book in the number of the *ſacred writings*; and he remarks in the ſame place, that the Hebrews (that is, the Helleniſts, or the converted Jews) conſidered it as hagiographical; and elſewhere (vid. Præf. in Lib. Salom.) that the church, though it read Judith, did not receive it as canonical. Vid. alſo, in Prol. Gal. Epiſt. ad Fur. & Bellarm. de Verbo Dei, Lib. I. c. x. Eraſm. in Cenſur. Præf. Hieron.

reve-

reverenced as an inſpired work by the writers of the Romiſh church; who are, however, much perplexed and diſtreſſed for want of arguments to ſupport its pretenſions.

THE book preſents an intereſting ſcene of ambition fruſtrated, and of intemperance puniſhed. The hiſtory is written with great grandeur and animation, and the Aſſyrian and Hebrew manners are well deſcribed. The prayer, and the hymn of Judith, are compoſed with much piety [H]. The book contains nothing exceptionable in point of doctrine, for where Judith celebrates God's juſtice in puniſhing the crime of the Shechemites [I], ſhe by no means attempts to juſtify Simeon for his vindictive and indiſcriminate cruelty. If the addreſs with which ſhe accompliſhed her deſigns ſhould be thought to partake of too much of an inſidious character; it may be permitted, at leaſt, to admire the heroic patriotiſm and piety which prompted her to undertake the exploit; the urgency and importance of the occaſion, will likewiſe excuſe the indiſcreet expoſure of her perſon to intemperate paſſions; and in the general deſcription of her character, ſhe may be allowed to have preſented an exemplary diſplay of the virtues which become the widowed ſtate [K].

[H] Concil. Trid. Seſſ. 4.
[I] Chap. ix. 2.
[K] Ambroſe de Vid. Fulgent. Epiſt. 2.

OF THE

REST OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

THE chapters entitled, the Reſt of the Chapters of the Book of Eſther, are not extant in the Hebrew, nor in the Chaldaic language, but only in the Greek and Latin copies. Origen was of opinion, that they had formerly exiſted in the Hebrew [A], though omitted in the copies that remained in his time; and Huet, upon a very improbable ſuppoſition, conceives them to have been the production of the great ſynagogue, and to have been tranſlated from ſome more copious manuſcripts by the Septuagint tranſlators [B]; but theſe tranſlators certainly confined themſelves to the canonical books.

IT

[A] Vid. Origen in Johan. tom. ii. & Epiſt. ad African.

[B] Origen, indeed, quoting ſome paſſage from the fourteenth chapter of the book of Eſther, ſays, "in the book of Eſther, according to the Seventy," the ſpurious parts being annexed to ſome copies of the Septuagint, though, indeed, long after that verſion was made, as Origen muſt have known, however

It is at leaſt very doubtful whether theſe chapters did ever exiſt in the Hebrew language; and it is unqueſtionable that they never were in the Hebrew canon. If, likewiſe, we are to rely on the accounts of this book, there is reaſon to believe that even the authentic book of Eſther was not tranſlated by the authors of the Septuagint into Greek; for in the firſt verſe of the ſecond chapter of this apocryphal part, it is ſaid, that the epiſtle of Phurim, by which was probably meant the book of Eſther, was interpreted into Greek by Lyſimachus [c]; who was poſſibly an Helleniſtical Jew reſiding at Jeruſalem; and the apocryphal parts contained in this book were, perhaps, added to the Greek tranſlation by Doſitheus and Ptolomeus, or by ſome other Helleniſts of Alexandria. They appear to have been ſubſequent additions interpolated in various parts of the Greek copies by ſome perſon deſirous of giving embelliſhment to the hiſtory; and who inſerted into the

however he might think it unneceſſary there to diſtinguiſh the canonical from the ſpurious parts. Vid. Epiſt. ad African. Origen elſewhere rejects theſe additions as apocryphal. Vid. Sixt. Senens. Bib. Sanct. Lib. I. ſect. 3. & Lib. V. An. 250.

[c] According to this account, it was tranſlated in the fourth year of the reign of Ptolemy; who, if he were Ptolemy Philometor, lived long after the Septuagint tranſlation was made. Some conceive that Ptolemy Philadelphus was meant; in the ſeventh year of whoſe reign that verſion is ſuppoſed to have been executed; and Huet imagines that the Seventy adopted this work of Lyſimachus into their tranſlation of the ſcriptures, on an idea that it was executed before the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus.

body of the work ſuch traditionary or fanciful circumſtances as his enquiry or invention could furniſh, From the Greek theſe additions were tranſlated into the old Italic verſion [D]. They were not, however, conſidered as canonical by the ancient church [E], though they might ſometimes paſs uncenſured as annexed to the canonical book. St. Jerom, who confined himſelf to what was in the Hebrew, did not admit them into his tranſlation [F]; but repreſents them as rhetorical appendages and embelliſhments annexed to the Italic verſion. Since that time, the moſt judicious writers [G] have not ſcrupled to

[D] This differed both from the Hebrew and Greek copies.

[E] Melito ap. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. IV. c. xxvi. Athan. Epiſt. 39. Gregor. Nazianz. Carm. de Script. Sixt. Senens, Bib. Lib. I. ſect. 3. Even the canonical book of Eſther, indeed, is not expreſsly enumerated in theſe catalogues: either becauſe of theſe ſpurious additions, or as the generality of writers ſuppoſe, becauſe the authentic book was reckoned as one book with thoſe of Ezra and Nehemiah; the three being attributed to the ſame author. The fathers profeſs to receive the whole of the Hebrew canon excluſively; and in the ſynopſis attributed to Athanaſius, the apocryphal part of Eſther, which is deſcribed as beginning with the dream of Mordecai, is rejected; and the authentic part is there ſaid to be reckoned as one book with another; which other muſt have been that of Ezra. Vid. alſo, Hieron. Præf. in Ezram. & Nehem. The book is reckoned in the catalogues of Origen, Hilary, Cyril, and Epiphanius; and in that of the council of Laodicea.

[F] Hieron. Præf. in Eſther. In the Greek church they are ſtill ſuffered to conſtitute a part of the book of Eſther.

[G] Grotius Præf. ad Addit. Eſther. Dyoniſ. Carthuſ. Cajetan. Raynold Heidegger, Lib. II. c. x. Kenthii Proleg. ad Lib.

to conſider them as extrinſic and ſpurious appendages; though they are canonized, together with the authentic chapters, by the Council of Trent; and paſſages from them are inſerted into the offices of the Romiſh church.

It is manifeſt on conſidering the canonical book, that it is a complete and perfect work; and theſe apocryphal parts, which are introduced into the Greek copies, will appear to be ſuperfluous and cumbrous additions, to thoſe who take the pains to examine them. They are in a different ſtile from that of the authentic chapters, and conſiſt partly of a repetition of particulars contained in them. The firſt chapter, which in the Greek copies is annexed to the tenth of the canonical chapters, conſiſts of an interpretation of a pretended dream of Mordecai, which contains ſome fanciful conceits, and was furniſhed probably by the ſame perſon that fabricated the dream which follows in the next chapter. The intimation contained in the firſt verſe of the ſecond or eleventh chapter, was poſſibly written by ſome Jew of Alexandria; it was not in the ancient Italic verſion. The dream which is related in this eleventh chapter, and which in the Greek is placed before the canonical part, is evidently the reverie of ſome inventive writer; and afterwards prefixed to the work. It does not form a proper introduction to the book; and in the fifth verſe of the ſecond ca-

Lib. Apoc. V. T. p. 27. Sixtus Senenſis calls them, laceras Appendices & pannoſa Additamenta. Vid. Bib. Sanct.

nonical

nonical chapter, Mordecai is introduced as a perſon not before-mentioned; and his genealogy, and other particulars, are deſcribed there, and in the ſucceeding verſe, with a minuteneſs which muſt have been quite redundant, if the ſecond verſe of the eleventh chapter had been authentic.

THE account of the devices, and of the diſcovery of the two eunuchs who conſpired againſt the life of Artaxerxes, is a repetition, with ſome alterations of what is related in the ſecond chapter of the authentic part [H]; and could not properly be prefixed (as it is in the Greek) to the canonical book which opens the hiſtory as if nothing had been previouſly communicated. The ſixth or fifteenth chapter contains a deſcription of Eſther's appearance and reception by the King, which is borrowed from the fifth chapter of the genuine hiſtory [I], and embelliſhed with ſome extraneous particulars. So likewiſe the prayers of Mordecai and Eſther, contained in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters [K]; as well as the letter in the thirteenth [L] chapter; and that in

[H] Eſther ii. 21—23.

[I] The fifteenth chapter is in the Greek and Vulgate inſerted immediately after Eſther's prayer (as given in the fourteenth chapter) inſtead of the two firſt verſes of the fifth chapter.

[K] Theſe prayers are placed in the Greek immediately after the ſeventeenth verſe of the fourth chapter.

[L] This in the Greek is added after the thirteenth verſe of the third chapter. It might be grounded on ſome authentic accounts, as the ſubſtance of it is related by Joſephus.

the

the ſixteenth [M], which concludes the apocryphal book, are all obviouſly fictitious inventions deſigned by ſome rhetorical writer [N], to decorate and complete the hiſtory. They are probably accounts fabricated in deſigned conformity to particulars alluded to by the inſpired writer in his book; and are interwoven with ſome ingenuity into the body of the work. The forgery is, however, occaſionally betrayed by the introduction of circumſtances incompatible with the genuine parts [O]; and rather inconſiſtent with the period aſſigned to the hiſtory [P]. Some Greek and Latin copies contain ſtill more ex-

[M] This edict in the Greek copies follows the twelfth verſe of the eighth chapter. It appears from the ſtile to have been originally written in Greek, and both the letters are mentioned in the authentic book in a manner that ſhews they were not inſerted in the hiſtory. Vid. Eſth. iii. 14. viii. 13.

[N] Hieron. ad Paul. & Euſtoch. Sixt. Senens. Bib. Lib. VIII.

[O] Comp. chap. vi. 3. with xii. 5. Chap. v. 2. with chap. xv. 4. Chap. iii. 12. with chap. xiii. 6. Chap. ix. 1. with chap. vi. 8.

[P] The King is made in chap. xvi. 10. to ſtile Aman a Macedonian; and afterwards to talk of his deſire "to tranſlate the kingdom of the Perſians to the Macedonians;" particulars that lead us to ſuſpect an anachroniſm, as they were more adapted to the ſentiments and circumſtances of a later period, when the Perſians and Macedonians were at war. In the ninth chapter of the canonical book, Haman is in the Greek called a Macedonian, but the Hebrew word האגגי, ſhould have been rendered as by St. Jerom, and in our tranſlation, the Agagite, that is, of the race of Agag, King of the Amalekites. Joſephus deſcribes Haman as an Amalekite. Vid. Antiq. Lib. XI. c. vi. Eſther ix. 24. iii. 10.

traneous

traneous particulars; and the Chaldee Paraphraſe is loaded with accumulated additions. The copies, indeed, vary ſo much from each other, that Bellarmine [q] fancied that there muſt have been two original hiſtories: the largeſt of which he conceived to comprize the Greek additions. Our church judiciouſly adheres to the chapters which are contained in the Hebrew: which are indiſputably authentic; and furniſh an entire and valuable hiſtory. The adventitious parts are, however, ſuffered to continue in our bibles as profitable in a ſubordinate degree. They deſerve not to be incorporated with the genuine hiſtory, though they illuſtrate the characters, and dilate on the virtues diſplayed for our inſtruction by the ſacred writer.

[q] Bellarm. de Verb. Dei, Lib. I. c. vii.

OF THE

BOOK OF THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON.

THE works of Solomon in general, were emphatically ſtiled the Books of Wiſdom, and were ſo cited by the fathers [A]; and in the Eccleſiaſtical language, the Book of Wiſdom comprehends not only all the authentic Books of Solomon, but alſo Eccleſiaſticus; and this which is called the Book of Wiſdom, or according to the Greek, the Wiſdom of Solomon. The author of this book aſſumes the title, and ſpeaks in the character of that monarch [B]; but though it may, perhaps, contain ſome ſentiments ſelected from his works, and others aſcribed to him by tradition [C], it cannot be received as an inſpired book; and it was certainly

[A] Melito ap. Euſeb. Eccleſ. Lib. IV. c. xxv. Clem. Epiſt. ad Cor. Epiſt. 57. Origen. Hom. xvii. Cyprian. Teſt. Lib. III. c. xvi. Ambroſe de Parad. Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. VI.

[B] Vid. c. vii. 7—21. compared with 1 Kings, c. iii. 13. c. xiv. 29—34. Vid. c. viii. 14, 15, 19, 21. c. ix. 7, 8, &c.

[C] Barto Cocceius Biblioth. Rabb. tom. i. p. 249.

compoſed

compoſed long after the time of Solomon. It never was in the Hebrew canon [D], and probably never in the Hebrew language [E]. It is not reckoned in the ſacred catalogues of the earlier church; and the generality of ancient writers confeſs, that it is not to be conſidered as the work of Solomon. It contains citations of ſcripture from the Septuagint, even where that verſion differs from the Hebrew text [F]; and borrows from books written long after the time of Solomon [G].

THE copy which has the higheſt pretenſions to be conſidered as the original, is in Greek proſe. Some learned men have fancied, that they have diſcovered in this book, as well as in that of Eccleſiaſticus, the Hebrew meaſure, which obtains in the authentic works of Solomon [H]. The ſentences have indeed often a poetical turn; and in the Alexandrian manuſcript, they are written in regular arrangement, like the book of Job, of Pſalms, and thoſe of

[D] Melito Epiſt. ad Oneſim. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. IV. c. xxv. Athan. Synop. Epiphan. de Pond. & Menſur. Hieron. Prol. in Lib. Solom. Joh. Damaſcen. de Fid. Orthod. Lib. IV. c. xviii.

[E] Auguſt. de Civit. Dei. Lib. XVII. c. xviii. Hieron. Prol. Gal.

[F] Chap. v. 10, 11. from Prov. xxx. 19. Ch. xi. 12. from Iſaiah iii. 10.

[G] Compare Wiſd. iii. 14. with Iſaiah lvi. 4, 5. Wiſd. ix. 13. with Iſaiah xl. 13. Wiſd. xiii. 11. with Iſaiah xliv. 13. Wiſd. v. 18. with Iſaiah lix. 17. Wiſd. ii. 6, 7. with Iſaiah lvi. 12.

[H] Vid. Grabe's Proleg. tom. ult. c. i. 2. Calmet's Dict. in Wiſd. Epiphan. de Ponder. & Menſur.

Solomon,

Solomon, to which this was ſubjoined in ſome old Latin tranſlations, and by Dr. Grabe in his edition. Hence ſome have conceived that it was tranſlated from the Hebrew into Greek; and ſome with leſs reaſon ſuppoſe it to have been tranſlated from the Chaldee, in which language R. Moſes Ben Nachman profeſſes to have ſeen it [I]; though probably what he ſaw was a tranſlation from the Greek into that language.

But in whatever language it was written, it has always been deſervedly eſteemed as a treaſure of wiſdom. It was compoſed in imitation of the ſtile of Solomon, though, perhaps, not deſigned to paſs for his work, but to communicate ſuch inſtructions as might be conſiſtent with his aſſumed character. Many ancient writers have cited it as a work attributed to Solomon [K], and as not unworthy, from its reſemblance to his writings, to be conſidered as the performance of that enlightened monarch; and ſome appear to have conſidered it as his genuine production. Lactantius, with other writers, repreſents, in looſe citation, the deſcription of the juſt man perſecuted, which is contained in the ſecond chapter, to be a prophecy delivered by Solomon concerning our Saviour's ſufferings [L]. It is cer-

[I] R. Moſes Ben Nachman, Prol. Com. in Pentat.

[K] Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. VI. p. 669. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. VI. c. vii. Tertul. cont. Marcion, Lib. III. Origen cont. Celſ. Lib. III. & Homil. 8. in Exod. Hieron. in Pſalm lxxiii.

[L] Lactant. de Ver. Sap. Lib. IV. § 16. Wiſd. ii. 12—21.

tain,

tain, however, that the book was not written by Solomon, as St. Auſtin, who likewiſe conſiders this paſſage as prophetic, allows [M]. The antiquity and high importance of the book, appear to have excited great reverence in the ancient church [N]; and ſome of the fathers ſeem to have thought that the book of Wiſdom, and that of Eccleſiaſticus, contained paſſages, at leaſt, that were inſpired. St. Auſtin affirms that the chriſtian writers who immediately ſucceeded the apoſtles, adduced its teſtimony as divine [O]; but it does not appear that they, or St. Auſtin himſelf, conſidered the book as really the work of an inſpired penman, ſince he allowed that neither this book, nor that of Eccleſiaſticus, were produced againſt gainſayers with the ſame authority as the undoubted writings of Solomon. And he elſe-

[M] Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVII. c. xx.

[N] St. Auſtin ſays, "Non debuit repudiari ſententia Libri ſapientiæ, qui meruit in Eccleſia Chriſti de gradu lectorum tam longâ annoſitate recitari." From this it ſhould ſeem, that the apocryphal books were read in a lower place by the lectours, or inferior officers of the church. Whereas the inſpired books were read by the prieſts and biſhops from a more conſpicuous place. De Gradu Epiſcoporum. Vid. Auguſt. de Prædeſt. c. xiv. § 27. Edit. Antwerp.

[O] St. Auſtin may be underſtood to mean, that they who cited Wiſd. iv. 11. cited it as a faithful ſaying, and as grounded on divine authority. Vid. de Prædeſt. Sanct. c. xiv. § 28. & Cyprian. L. de Mortal. & L. Teſtim. 3 ad Quirin. St. Auſtin ſays likewiſe of this book in an hyperbolical encomium, that it deſerves "ab omnibus Chriſtianis, cum veneratione divinæ auctoritatis audiri." Vid. alſo, de Doct. Chriſt. Lib. II. c. viii.

where

where admits, that after the death of Malachi, the Jews had no Prophet till the appearance of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptiſt [P]. And the fathers, indeed, in general, however they might be dazzled by particular paſſages, or conſider them as fragments of inſpired writings, repreſent the book of Wiſdom as inferior to the canonical books; they eſteem it as a work of admirable tendency, and as of a ſcriptural character, but not as abſolutely derived from the ſuggeſtions of the Holy Spirit [Q].

Some partial councils [R] admitted it as canonical in a ſecondary interpretation of that word; but it was always conſidered as inferior to the books contained in the Hebrew catalogue, till by the peremptory deciſion of the Council of Trent, it was received as a work of equal authority with them. Still,

[P] Auguſt. de Civit. Dei. Lib. XVIII. c. xxiv.

[Q] It is expreſsly repreſented as inferior to the ſacred books by many writers. Vid. Hierarch. de Divin. Nomin. c. 4. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. VI. c. xii. Athan. Epiſt. 39. & Synop. Epiphan. de Pond. & Menſur. Philaſt. de Hæres. Prodiant. Baſil Præf. Com. in Prov. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei. Lib. XVII. c. xx. Hugo de S. Vict. de Script. et Scriptor. Sac. c. vi. Thom. Aquinas, in Dionyſ. de Divin. Hom. c. iv. Lect. IX. Du Pin, Diſſ. Prel.

[R] As the third Council of Carthage, that of Sardis, and that of Conſtantinople in Trullo; the eleventh of Toledo, and that of Florence, Provincial ſynods, or corrupt councils unduly influenced, of which the canons relative to the ſcriptures were ſometimes afterwards forged or altered, and which were not received by œcumenical councils. Vid. Coſin's Schol. Hiſt. Du Pin, Hiſt. Eccleſ. & Bib. Pat. tom. i. p. i. and Arnald's note to Calmet's preface.

however, the moſt zealous defenders [s] of the Romiſh church acknowledge, that it never was in the Hebrew canon as compoſed by Ezra [t]; at the cloſing of which we have every reaſon to believe that the ſpirit of inſpiration ceaſed.

The book was probably written by an Helleniſtical Jew; but whether before or after Chriſt, has been diſputed. Grotius is of opinion, that it was originally written in Hebrew by a Jew who lived at ſome time intermediate between Ezra and Simon the Juſt; and that it was tranſlated by a Chriſtian with ſome freedom and additions of evangelical doctrine. But the ſtile, as St. Jerom has obſerved, indicates rather the artificial contexture of Grecian eloquence, than the terſeneſs and compreſſive ſimplicity of the Hebrew language. The book is alſo replete with alluſions to Greek mythology, and with imitations of Grecian writers: with whoſe works, and eſpecially with thoſe of Plato, the author appears to have been intimately acquainted.

St. Jerom informs us, that many ancient writers affirmed that the book of Wiſdom was written by

[s] As Iſidore, Nicephorus, Rabanus Maurus, Hugo, Lyran, Cajetan. Vid. Niceph. Lib. IV. c. xxxiii. Limboreh. Theolog. Chriſt. Lib. I. c. iii. Melch. Canus Loc. Theolog. Lib. V. cap. ult. Baron Ann. tom. viii. ad Ann. 692, Calmet's Preface.

[t] Iſidore in one place relates, that ſome perſons reported that it was expunged from the Jewiſh canon becauſe it contained a clear prophecy of Chriſt; an idle fable which Iſidore muſt have diſcredited. Vid. Offic. Lib. I. c. xii.

Philo

Philo Judæus; by whom the generality of commentators [u] ſuppoſe to have been meant the Philo ſenior, who is mentioned by Joſephus, as having furniſhed ſome relations concerning the Jews which were tolerably faithful [x]; and who is generally ſuppoſed to have flouriſhed before or about the time of the Maccabees. And there are many reaſons which ſhould lead us to ſuppoſe that the book [y] was written before the birth of Chriſt. But as ſome paſſages in the book ſeem to indicate an acquaintance with the particulars of the Goſpel diſpenſation, and to be imitative of parts of the New Teſtament: many perſons have maintained that the author muſt have lived after the publication of the evangelical writings; and ſome have ſuppoſed, from a conformity between the principles and ſentiments contained in this book and thoſe diſperſed through the works of

[u] Hieron. Præf. in Proverb. Salom. Huet. Prop. 4. Boſſuet Præf. in Lib. Sap. Driedo de Eccleſ. Dogm. c. iv.

[x] Joſeph. cont. Apion. Lib. I. Joſephus remarks, that Philo, and ſome other hiſtorians of whom he ſpeaks, were entitled to indulgence, as they had it not in their power to become accurately acquainted with the Hebrew writings; from which we may collect, that he was ignorant of the Hebrew language, and probably he was an Helleniſtic Jew, which is conſiſtent with the account of St. Jerom. Some poetical fragments of Philo relative to the Patriarchs are cited by Alexander Polyhiſtor. Vid. Euſeb. Præp. Evang. Lib. IX. c. xx. & xxiv. Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. I. This Philo was a different perſon from Philo Biblius, who flouriſhed under Adrian and Trajan.

[y] Origen cont. Celſ. Lib. I. Euſeb. Demonſt. Evan. Lib. I. c. vi. Selden de Pentateuch.

Philo [z] of Alexandria, which we now poſſeſs, that he was the author of it [A]. Dr. Rainolds imagines that it was compoſed about A. D. 42, upon the occaſion of an order from the Emperor Caligula, that his ſtatue ſhould be ſet up and adored in the temple [B] of Jeruſalem, when Philo was ſent to Rome by the Jews to plead againſt this prophanation, but without effect. This ſuppoſition the learned writer defends, as conſiſtent with the argument and drift of the book of Wiſdom; and to this idea he refers thoſe precepts in the firſt and ſixth chapters, which deſcribe the duty of princes; as well as for the denunciations againſt tyrants and idolatry; and conceives that they were deſigned to convey admonition and reproof to Caligula.

But notwithſtanding the many preſumptive arguments that have been urged in ſupport of this opinion, there is ſome reaſon to believe that the work was not written by Philo of Alexandria [c], but, indeed, previouſly

[z] Firſt publiſhed at Paris by Turnebus in 1552, afterwards at London, by Dr. Mangey, in 1742, 2 vols. Vid. collated paſſages in Calmet's Diſſertation ſur l'Auteur du Livre de la Sageſſe.

[A] Baſil Epiſt. ad Amphiloch. Joh. Beleth. de Div. Offic. c. lx. Whitaker's Origin of Arianiſm, p. 132—136.

[B] Sueton. in Vita Caligulæ 22. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XVIII. c. viii. Rain. Cenſur. Apoc. Prælect. 22.

[c] This Philo was very converſant with the ſacred writings, and indulged himſelf too much in the fanciful explications of them. His works, which blend the principles of Plato with the doctrines of ſcripture, are ſuppoſed to have been the ſource at which Origen and the myſtical writers imbibed an extravagant

previouſly to the birth of Chriſt. Some paſſages in it appear to be cited by writers who were nearly contemporary with Philo [D]; and it is probable, that a work profeſſing to be the production of Solomon, was publiſhed under the Jewiſh diſpenſation; as, indeed, by the generality of writers it was ſuppoſed to be.

THE correſpondence which has been conceived to exiſt between this book and the works of Philo, might, it is ſaid, be occaſioned by the imitations of the latter; and the ſuppoſed reſemblances between paſſages in this book, and others in the New Teſtament, may be thought on examination to be either imitations of ſimilar paſſages in the ſacred books of the Old Teſtament [E]; or ſuch caſual coincidences

extravagant ſpirit of figurative interpretation. Philo is repreſented to have lived in friendſhip with St. Peter at Rome in the reign of Claudius, to have been converted to Chriſtianity, and to have afterwards apoſtatiſed. Vid. Joſeph. Lib. VIII. c. x. Euſeb. Hiſt. Lib. II. c. ii. xvii. xviii. Phot. Cod. 105. Hieron. de Script. Eccleſ. c. xi. Euſeb. Præp. Lib. VII. c. xii. Some authors maintain that the book of Wiſdom differs widely from the ſtile of Philo, and contains ſome principles very oppoſite to thoſe laid down in his works. Vid. Calmet, Preface ſur le Livre de la Sageſſe.

[D] Barnab. Epiſt. from Wiſd. ii. 12. Clem. Rom. Epiſt. ad Corinth. c. iii. from Wiſd. ii. 24. c. xxvii. from Wiſd. xi. 22. & xii. 12.

[E] Thus Wiſd. ii. 18. and Matt. xxvii. 43. might both be derived from Pſa. xxii. 8, 9. So Wiſd. iii. 7. & Matt. xiii. 43. might be from Dan. xii. 3. Wiſd. ii. 7, 8. & 1 Cor. xv. 32. from Iſa. xxii. 13. & lvi. 12. Wiſd. v. 18, 19. & Epheſ. vi. 14. from Iſa. lix. 7. Wiſd. vi. 7. & Acts x. 34, &c. from

dences [F] of ſentiments or expreſſions as may be found between all works treating on the ſame ſubject.

It need not, however, be ſuppoſed, that the beautiful paſſage contained in the ſecond chapter, though written before the coming of Chriſt, can conſer any character of inſpiration on the book; for if we conſider the deſcription of the juſt man perſecuted and condemned to a ſhameful death by his conſpiring enemies, as bearing a prophetic aſpect to the ſufferings and condemnation of our Saviour by the Jews; it might ſtill have been framed by a writer converſant with the prophetic books [G], without any inſpired knowledge. But it is, perhaps, only applicable by a uſual accommodation and undeſigned reſemblance to our Saviour, who might be eminently ſtiled "the

2 Chron. xix. 7. or from Job xxxiv. 19. Wiſd. ix. 9. & John i. 1—3, 10. from Prov. viii. 22. Wiſd. ix. 13. and Rom. xi. 34. or 1 Cor. ii. 16. from Iſa. xl. 13. Wiſd. xv. 7. and Rom. ix. 21. from Iſa. xlv. 9. and Jerem. xviii. 6. Wiſd. xvi. 26. and Matt. iv. 4. from Deut. viii. 3. Wiſd. iii. 8. and 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. from Dan. vii. 18—22.

[F] Comp. Wiſd. vi. 3. with Rom. xiii. 1. Wiſd. vii. 26. with Heb. i. 3. Wiſd. xii. 24. with Rom. i. 23. Wiſd. xiii. 1. with Rom. i. 19, 20. There is, however, no reaſon why the evangelical writers ſhould not be ſuppoſed to have occaſionally adopted the expreſſions, or even the ſentiments of a pious though uninſpired writer.

[G] Comp. chap. ii. 12. eſpecially as cited by Barnabas, with Iſaiah iii. 10. Chap. ii. 18. with Pſa. xxii. 8. or xxi. 9. in the Septuagint. See alſo Matt. xxvii. 43. where David's prophetic expreſſions are uſed. The righteous are often called the ſons of God in a general ſenſe. Vid. Exod. iv. 22. Prov. i. 8, 10. and Wiſd. xviii. 13. and v. 5.

juſt

juſt man," and who was in an appropriate ſenſe, the Son of God. The picture ſeems, indeed, to be copied and applied to others by ſubſequent writers [H].

THE paſſages in which the author ſeems to imperſonate the word of God [I], and to attribute to it diſtinct powers and effects, need not be conſidered as intentionally prophetic of the attributes and operations of the ſecond perſon in the Trinity; but were probably deſigned as generally deſcriptive of God's omnipotent proceedings; or were accidentally figurative of Chriſt's character, by being borrowed as to their expreſſions from parts of the ſacred writings [K]. So likewiſe, thoſe beautiful encomiums on wiſdom, with which the book abounds, though written with a piety highly enraptured and ſublime, are not to be conſidered as inſpired and concerned illuſtrations of that perfect wiſdom which dwell in an eſpecial degree in Chriſt; but were deſigned only to celebrate that created wiſdom, which being derived as an emanation from God, reflects his unſpotted perfections; and irradiates the minds of thoſe to whom it is imparted. The author, however, in imitation, perhaps, of Solomon's attractive imagery [L], perſonifies

[H] Plato de Repub. Lib. II. Cicero de Repub. Lib. III. Lactant. Inſtitut. Lib. VI. § 17. ex Senecæ Lib. Moral. Philoſoph.

[I] Chap. ix. 1. xvi. 12, 13, 26. xviii. 15.

[K] Deut. viii. 3. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6. Pſa. cvii. 20.

[L] Prov. viii. The magnificent deſcription which Solomon here gives of the divine wiſdom, was often applied by the ancient chriſtians to that eternal wiſdom which was re-

perſonifies this divine wiſdom; and therefore the deſcription neceſſarily bears a reſemblance to the character of Chriſt, in whom the fulneſs of wiſdom perſonally reſided.

But though the work be not derived from that infallible ſpirit of which the ſtamp and character are to be diſcovered only in the ſacred books, it was evidently the production of a pious and enlightened writer; of one, who by application to revealed wiſdom, had acquired ſome portion of its excellence, and learnt to imitate its language. And except in ſome few paſſages where we are tempted to ſuſpect a taint of falſe philoſophy [M]; or fictitious additions to the accounts of ſacred hiſtory [N]; there is nothing in the book inconſiſtent with the accounts, or unfavourable to the deſigns of revelation; it offers much ſublime admonition to the Princes and Leaders of mankind; it paints in very eloquent deſcription, the folly and conſequences of idolatry; overthrows many pernicious errors, and delivers juſt information concerning a future life and judgment. The ſix firſt chapters, which form, as it were, a preface to the book, are a kind of paraphraſe of the nine firſt chapters of the book of Proverbs; in the ſeventh and eighth chapters, the author propoſes himſelf as an example, under

vealed to mankind in Chriſt, or rather to our Saviour's perſon, who was himſelf the eternal word and wiſdom of the Father. But it was, perhaps, only generally applicable to God's revealed wiſdom. Vid. Juſt. Mart. p. 267. edit. Thirlb.

[M] Chap. viii. 20. Arnald. & Calmet.

[N] Chap. xvi. 17—19. xvii. 3—6.

the

the name of Solomon; the ninth chapter is a paraphrafe of the prayer which Solomon made to the Lord at the beginning of his reign [o]; and from the tenth chapter to the end is a continuation of the fame prayer dilated; which though extended to a conſiderable length by the intermixture of nice diſquiſitions and extraneous diſcourſe, is ſtill apparently imperfect. The ſtile of this book is various; it is often tragical, and ſometimes turgid, and not ſeldom elegant and ſublime; it abounds in epithets and poetical imagery. The author often imitates the ſententious periods of Solomon, but with leſs ſucceſs, ſays Biſhop Lowth, than the author of the ſucceeding book [p].

[o] 1 Kings iii. 6—9. [p] Prælect. Poet. 24.

OF THE

BOOK OF ECCLESIASTICUS.

THIS Book, like the preceding, has ſometimes been conſidered as the production of Solomon, from its reſemblance to the inſpired works of that writer [A]. In the Latin church it was eſteemed the laſt of the five books attributed to him. It is cited as the work of that enlightened King by ſeveral of the fathers; was joined with his books in moſt of the copies; and like them is written with a kind of metrical arrangement in the Alexandrian manuſcript, being ſuppoſed to have been compoſed originally in metre [B]. Still, however, it muſt have been written long after the time of Solomon, who with the ſucceeding prophets that flouriſhed before and after the captivity, is here mentioned [C]; ſince the high-prieſt Simon, who lived a little before the Maccabees, is ſpoken of; ſince the

[A] Origen. Homil. in Lib. Numer. Hom. I. in Ezekiel. Chryſoſ. in Pſa. cxxxiv. Cyprian. Lib. III. Epiſt. IX. Teſtim. Lib. III. § 96, 113. & Hilar. in Pſa. cxliv.

[B] Epiphan. de Pond. & Menſur.

[C] Chap. xlvii. 13, &c.

words

words of Malachi are cited [D]: and ſince the author deſcribes himſelf in circumſtances that could not have occurred to Solomon [E]. The book can only be ſuppoſed to contain ſome ſcattered ſentiments of Solomon, induſtriouſly collected [F] with other materials for the work, by an Hebrew writer ſtiled Jeſus; who profeſſes himſelf the author [G], and who is repreſented to have ſo been by his grandſon [H]; but who, indeed, imitates the didactic ſtile of Solomon, and like him aſſumes the character of a preacher.

JESUS was, as we learn from the ſame authority, a man who had travelled much in the purſuit of knowledge; who was very converſant with the ſcriptures, and deſirous of producing, in imitation of the ſacred writers, ſome uſeful work for the inſtruction of mankind, and who having collected together many valuable ſentences from the Prophets and other writers, their ſucceſſors, compiled them into one work with ſome original additions of his own production. What this Jeſus produced in the Syriac,

[D] Chap. xlviii. 10. from Malach. iv. 6.

[E] Chap. xxxiv. 11, 12. li. 6.

[F] Druſ. Obſervat. Lib. I. cap. xviii. Athanaſius calls Jeſus Οπαδὸν τῦ Σολομωνῆ, Salomonis Aſſecla. Vid. Athan. Synop. Bartolocc. Bib. Rabb. tom. i. p. 249.

[G] Chap. l. 27.

[H] See the ſecond prologue. This prologue is in all the copies of the Vulgate, and in the Roman edition of the Greek. It is probably the authentic work of the grandſon, though it is not in the Syriac or Arabic verſions. Vid. Euſeb. in Chron. Hieron. in Dan. ix. Epiphan. Hæres. 8. In the Roman edition of the Greek it is entitled ſimply "the Prologue."

or

or vulgar Hebrew of his time, his grandſon tranſlated into Greek for the benefit of his countrymen in Egypt, who by long diſuſe had forgotten the Hebrew tongue. To this grandſon we are indebted for the poſſeſſion of a valuable work, of which the original is now loſt, though St. Jerom profeſſes to have ſeen it [I]. The copies of which Munſter, and Paulus Fagius ſpeak, were probably Ben Sira's alphabet, or modern tranſlations from the Greek.

It has been a ſubject of ſome diſpute, whether the grandfather or grandſon be the perſon who ſhould be deſcribed as the ſon of Sirach. The book is entitled the Wiſdom of Jeſus, the ſon of Sirach; and this title muſt apply to the author, as the book cannot be ſuppoſed to have been denominated by the name of the tranſlator. The author, likewiſe, deſcribes himſelf as the ſon of Sirach in the fifty-firſt chapter, which appears to be the work of the ſame author [K]. The tranſlator, who is uſually called Jeſus, is likewiſe ſtiled the ſon of Sirach by Epiphanius [L]; and by the author of the anonymous

[I] Hieron. Præf. in Lib. Salom. St. Jerom informs us, that the Hebrew copy which he ſaw was entitled Parables (or Proverbs) on account probably of the proverbial and ſententious form in which its precepts were conveyed.

[K] Grotius, without any reaſon, attributes it, together with the three laſt verſes of the foregoing chapter, to the grandſon.

[L] Epiphan. de Pond. & Menſur. Iſidor. de Eccleſ. Offic. in Lib. I. c. xii. Euſeb. de Præp. Lib. VIII. c. ii. Hieron. in Dan. ix. Auguſt. de Doct. Chriſt. Lib. II. Grotius, Druſius, &c.

prologue,

prologue, which is ſuppoſed to have been written by Athanaſius, as it is extracted from the Synopſis attributed to him, and prefixed to this book [M], in ſome Greek, and in all the Latin editions, as well as in our tranſlation; and it is not improbable, that the younger Jeſus might likewiſe have been a ſon of Sirach, as names were often ſo entailed in families.

GENEBRARD [N] ſays, that Jeſus, the author of this book, was a prieſt of the race of Joſhua, the ſon of Joſedech [O]; and Iſidore repreſents him as his grandſon, though he muſt have lived much too long after Joſhua to have been ſo nearly related to him [P]. Huet and Calmet, in agreement with ſome Rabbinical writers, ſuppoſe that the author was the ſame perſon with Ben Sira, a Jewiſh writer, of

[M] This prologue is prefixed to the Greek in the Antwerp Polyglot, and to ſome other Greek editions; but it is not in the Roman edition, nor in the moſt ancient copies, nor in the Arabic or Syriac verſions. Its accounts can therefore be received only as of the ſame authority as that of the Synopſis, which was probably written by Athanaſius, Biſhop of Alexandria, who lived between A. D. 458 and 490, above a century after the great Athanaſius.

[N] Chronol. p. 16.

[O] Haggai i. 1.

[P] Some Greek manuſcripts make the author a grandſon of Eleazar. Vid. ap. Druſ. ad ch. 1. 3. Others make him a contemporary with Eleazar; and ſome writers pretend that he was one of the ſeventy interpreters ſent by Eleazar to Ptolemy Philadelphus: a perſon of the name of Jeſus being mentioned in the liſt given by Ariſtæas. Huet fancies that Jeſus, the grandſon, was the ſame perſon with Joſephus, the ſon of Uziel, and grandſon of Ben Sira.

whom

whom an alphabet of Proverbs is extant, both in Chaldee and Hebrew [Q], which correſponds in ſo many particulars with the book of Eccleſiaſticus, that Huet, and other writers, have conſidered it as a corrupted copy of the Hebrew work of Jeſus. If, however, as others contend, Ben Sira is to be conſidered as a different perſon, and according to traditionary accounts, the nephew of Jeremiah [R], it muſt be admitted that the author of Eccleſiaſticus has borrowed many things from his work: ſince ſuch a conformity as exiſts between them could ſcarcely be accidental [S].

THE author of this book is by Calmet and others ſuppoſed to have flouriſhed ſo late as under the Pontificate of Onias the Third; and to have fled into Egypt on account of the afflictions brought on his country by Antiochus Epiphanes, about 171 years before Chriſt, to whoſe perſecution they conceive that ſome parts of the book refer [T]. As, however, the paſſages produced in ſupport of this opinion bear no direct relation to particular calamities, but contain only general ſupplication for proſperity, and for the triumphant reſtoration of their tribes, which

[Q] Both were publiſhed with a Latin tranſlation by Fagius at Iſna in 1542. Ben Sira's book is ſaid to have been received by the Jews, among the Hagiographa of ſecondary rank. Vid. David in Baba Cama, C. Hachobel.

[R] Buxtorf. & Bartolocc. Bib. Rabbin.

[S] Cornel. a Lapid. Com. in Eccluſ.

[T] Chap. xxxvi. Vid. alſo, ch. xxxiv. 12. xxxv. and li. which, however, contain no particulars excluſively applicable to the time of Antiochus.

the

the Jews expected to experience in the advent of the Meſſiah; as the eulogium contained in the fiftieth chapter was probably deſigned for Simon the Juſt, the firſt high-prieſt of the name of Simon, whom the author appears to have remembered, and who died A. M. 5711 [u]; and as the younger Jeſus went into Egypt in the reign of Euergetes the Second, ſurnamed Phyſcon, who was admitted to a ſhare in the throne A. M. 3835 [x], it is more probable, that agreeably to the calculations of other chronologiſts, the book was written about A. M. 3772; when the author was, perhaps, about ſeventy years of age; and that it was tranſlated about ſixty or ſixty-three years after [y]; nearly at the time that it is ſuppoſed by Calmet to have been written.

The tranſlator profeſſes to have found the book

[u] Two Simons, both ſons of Onias, and both high-prieſts, are mentioned by Joſephus. The firſt, ſurnamed Juſtus, who as the laſt of the great ſynagogue, is ſuppoſed to have reviſed and completed the canon, is celebrated in this book. Vid. Joſeph. Ant. Lib. XII. c. 2. Euſeb. in Chronic. Genebr. Cornel. a Lapide. Druſius, Prid. ad An. 292. The ſecond Simon is mentioned in Antiq. Lib. XII. c. iv. He oppoſed Ptolemy Philopater's entrance into the ſanctuary. Vid. Third Book of Maccabees.

[x] He reigned twenty-four years in conjunction with Philometor, and twenty-eight years alone after the death of his brother. Vid. Uſher's Annals, Ann. A. C. 145. Vaillant in Ptolem. VII. ad An. Lagid. 192. Prid. Con. A. C. 169.

[y] Uſher ſuppoſes it to have been tranſlated 38 years earlier.

after

after he had continued ſome time in Egypt [z], where it might have been depoſited by his grandfather [A]; it was called Eccleſiaſticus [B] by the Latins, which title, though nearly ſynonimous with the Preacher, was deſigned to diſtinguiſh it from the book of Eccleſiaſtes. In Greek it is called the Wiſdom of Jeſus the Son of Sirach [c]. It is much to be admired for the excellency of its precepts, and none of the apocryphal books furniſh ſuch admirable inſtruction as this. But it has no title to be conſidered as an inſpired work: though it contains many paſſages derived from the ſacred writings, and eſpecially from thoſe of Solomon [D]; and ſome which have a ſlight reſemblance to parts of the New Teſtament [E], by accidental coincidence of thought

[z] It is uncertain from what æra the eight and thirtieth year mentioned in the prologue is reckoned. It might be that of the tranſlator's age. If we ſuppoſe it to have been the thirty-eighth year of Ptolemy's reign, above 100 years muſt have intervened between the time of writing and that of tranſlating the book.

[A] It is probable that Jeſus by αφομονον, or ιφομοιον, meant a copy of this book. In the anonymous prologue, it is ſaid, that Jeſus received the book from his father, which perhaps he might, either in Egypt or elſewhere; for he does not ſay abſolutely that he found the book in Egypt, but that being in Egypt, and having found the book, he judged it worthy a tranſlation.

[B] Some think that it was called Eccleſiaſticus by way of eminence, as the moſt valuable of the eccleſiaſtical books.

[c] In the Roman edition it is improperly ſtiled the Wiſdom of Sirach.

[D] Ecclus paſſim, & Huet. Prop. 4.

[E] Huet. and marginal references in our Bible.

and

and expreſſion; or by concurrent imitation of the early writers of the Old Teſtament. The book never was in the Hebrew canon; nor was it received by the primitive church of Chriſt, ſince it is not in the moſt ancient and authentic catalogues, and is expreſsly repreſented as an uncanonical book by many ancient writers [F]. It is, however, cited with great reverence by the fathers of the Greek and Latin church [G], many of whom endeavoured to ſtrengthen their religious opinions by the ſentiments contained in a book ſo deſervedly and ſo generally approved. It is cited as ſcripture in a general ſenſe of the word by many provincial ſynods, and received as in a lower degree canonical by ſome councils after the fourth century [H]. It was, however, univerſally conſidered as inferior to the books derived from the Hebrew canon, till received as of equal authority by the unadviſed and undiſcriminating decree of the Council of Trent [I].

All the copies of this book now extant vary con-

[F] Prol. of Jeſus. Can. Apoſt. Can. ult. Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. VI. c. xii. Athan. Epiſt. 39, & Synop. Epiphan. de Pond. & Menſ. Philaſt. Hæres. Prodiant. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVII. c. xx. Hieron. Prol. in Lib. Solom. Niceph. Lib. IV. c. xxxiii.

[G] Barnab. Epiſt. Conſtit. Apoſt. Lib. VII. c. xi. Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. VII. Origen. in Ezek. Hom. IX. cont. Celſ. Lib. VI. Cyprian. de baptiz. Hæret. § 27. Hilar. in 7 Ca. ſup. S. Matt. Epiphan. Hæres. 76. cont. Aetium. Auguſt. Lib. de Grat. & lib. Arbit. c. ii.

[H] Concil. Carth. 3, Can. 47.

[I] Concil. Trid. Seſſ. 4.

 ſiderably

ſiderably from each other; and the Latin, of which the date and author are uncertain, has many repetitions and additions interwoven ſeemingly as paraphraſtical ornaments by the tranſlator, or ſome ſubſequent writer. The Greek verſion, as made early and immediately from the original, is moſt entitled to conſideration. This tranſlation, however, ſeems to have been compoſed with too ſervile adherence to the original, and has often the obſcurity of a literal conſtruction.

The tranſlator was ſenſible of its defects, and apprehenſive, as he has been ſince accuſed, of miſinterpreting his author [K]. There has been a derangement of chapters between the thirtieth and thirty-ſixth [L]; which, as well as many corruptions and variations, may be imputed to the careleſſneſs of tranſcribers [M]. The old Engliſh verſions, as thoſe of Coverdale, and the Biſhop's Bible, by a too rigid adherence to the Vulgate, adopted many errors. Our laſt tranſlators, though not ſervilely attached to any copy, ſeem chiefly to have regarded the Complutenſian: which though ſuſpected of conforming its Greek to the Vulgate, is by Dr. Grabe [N], mentioned with praiſe, as derived from the moſt ancient manuſcripts. Their verſion is, however, in ſome places inaccurate and obſcure, and ſometimes erroneous.

[K] Prologue of Jeſus, and Druſius.
[L] Calmet Comm. in chap. xxx. 27.
[M] Hæſchelius.
[N] Grabe's Proleg. cap. iii. § 1.

The

THE work begins with an eulogium on Wiſdom; and many important inſtructions are delivered to the twenty-fourth chapter, when Wiſdom herſelf is introduced, and is ſuppoſed to continue to ſpeak, to the fifteenth verſe of the forty-ſecond chapter. Here the collection of wiſe ſayings, which are obviouſly written in imitation of the Proverbs of Solomon, concludes: and the author ſolemnly enters upon a pious hymn, in which he celebrates God's wiſdom, in a ſtrain highly rapturous and ſublime: and finiſhes his work with a panegyrick on the illuſtrious characters of his own nation, and with a prayer or thankſgiving for ſome deliverance which the author had perſonally experienced [o].

THIS diviſion, ſays Valeſius [p], is a manifeſt copy of the method and order of Solomon's writings: and exhibits an imitation of Proverbs, Eccleſiaſtes, and Canticles; though ſome maintain that the author left his work imperfect [q]. The book contains a fine ſyſtem of moral, political, and theological precepts; arranged in a leſs deſultory manner than

[o] Prideaux with Grotius, attributes this prayer to the grandſon, becauſe Ptolemy Phyſcon was a greater tyrant than his predeceſſors, in whoſe reigns the grandfather might have reſided in Egypt; but the author ſpeaks only of falſe accuſation to the King, which by no means implies that the King countenanced the perſecution; and, indeed, if he had, the author would hardly have eſcaped from, or at leaſt have complained of the cruelty. The grandfather might likewiſe have been accuſed before a King of ſome other country.

[p] Not. ad Script. Eccleſ. Lib. IV. c. xxii.

[q] The anonymous prologue ſays, "almoſt perfected."

the Proverbs of Solomon; and diſtributed under certain heads which ſeem to have been formerly claſſed under different titles: many of which are ſtill extant in ſome of the Greek copies. Some learned men have pretended to diſcover in the book the more ſecret and abſtruſe wiſdom aſcribed to Solomon, and taught in the ſchools of the Jewiſh doctors [R]. But it is chiefly valuable for the familiar leſſons which it affords for the direction of manners, in every circumſtance and condition, and for the general precepts which it communicates towards the daily regulation of life. Its maxims are explained by much variety of illuſtration, and occaſionally exemplified in the deſcription of character. The ancient writers entitled it Πανάρετος, conſidering it as a complete compendium of moral virtues; and, perhaps, no uninſpired production ever diſplayed a morality more comprehenſive, or more captivating and conſiſtent with the revealed laws of God. The book furniſhes, alſo, an inſtructive detail of the ſentiments and opinions that prevailed in the time of the author; it ſhews the impatience that then prevailed for the appearance of the expected Meſſiah [S]; and the firm confidence in the hope of a future life

[R] Lee's Diſſ. on the Second Book of Eſdras, p. 58.

[S] Chap. xxxvi. 1—17, the firſt part of which is cited by St. Auſtin as a kind of prophetic prayer for the arrival of Chriſt. Vid. Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVII. c. xx. See, alſo, chap. l. 22, 23. Theſe pious ſupplications for ſome future bleſſings indiſtinctly deſcribed, proceeded from a confidence

life and judgment, which had been built upon the aſſurances of the Law and the Prophets. It ſerves, likewiſe, to prove, that as the Goſpel diſpenſation approached, the Jews were prepared for its reception, by being more enlightened to underſtand the ſpiritual import and the figurative character of the Law.

fidence in the promiſes of the Prophets; and the Jews who, in the expectation of their Meſſiah, had at firſt regard only to one advent, looked to the full accompliſhment of the prophecies in his arrival, and therefore allude in their prayers to the expected converſion of the Gentiles; the final congregation of the tribes; and their triumphant victories, which remain yet to be fulfilled. The prayer ſpoken of in chap. li. 10. is ſtated by Mr. Whitaker to contain an acknowledgement of the ſecond perſon in the godhead, and is adduced as a proof of the belief of the Jews, in that eſſential doctrine, before the incarnation of our Lord. See the Origin of Arianiſm diſcloſed, p. 122.

OF THE

BOOK OF BARUCH,

WITH THE

EPISTLE OF JEREMIAH.

THE author of this Book profeſſes himſelf to be Baruch; a perſon of very illuſtrious birth, and diſtinguiſhed by his attachment to Jeremiah, and who was employed by that Prophet as a ſcribe or ſecretary, to write his prophecies [A]; and on ſome occaſions to read them to thoſe againſt whom they were directed. St. Jerom, Grotius, and others, are, however, of opinion, that the book was not written by Baruch, nor in the Hebrew language; but by ſome Helleniſtical Jew, who aſſumed the character of Baruch; and that the letter which forms a part of the book, was fabricated by his own invention [B]. But there is, perhaps, no ſufficient reaſon to diſpute the authenticity of the five firſt chapters; and the ſixth chapter, which is probably ſpurious, did not originally belong to this book. The Greek verſion

[A] Chap. i. 1. Jerem. paſſim. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. c. xi. and Preface to Jeremiah.

[B] Hieron. Prom. in Com. & Grot. Com. in Baruch.

of

of theſe five chapters abounds with Hebraiſms; and they were probably written in Hebrew, though not now extant in that language, nor ever admitted into the Hebrew canon [c]: becauſe Baruch, however he might have aſpired to the prophetic character, and have fought great things for himſelf [d], was not endowed with the gift of inſpiration; though he was on one occaſion made the ſubject of a divine revelation, and honoured by a conſolatory aſſurance from God.

The author in conſiſtency with the character of Baruch, whether rightly or falſely aſſumed, deſcribes himſelf as the ſon of Nerias, and as the grandſon of Maaſias, who were men of eminence in their country. He affirms, that he wrote the book at Babylon, in the fifth year, and in the ſeventh day of the month [e], after the Chaldæans had taken and burnt Jeruſalem; by which muſt be underſtood the fifth year of Jehoiachin's captivity, which correſponds with the fifth year of the reign of Zedekiah, and A. M. 3409: when Baruch accompanied his brother Seraias to Babylon [f], who was deputed from Zedekiah to

[c] Hieron. Præf. in Hierem.

[d] Jerem. xlv. 5. which ſome conceive to allude to a fruitleſs deſire of Baruch that he might be favoured with the prophetic ſpirit. Vid. Maimon. More Nevoch. Par. II. cap. xxxii.

[e] The name of the month is not ſpecified; it probably means the month Ciſleu, or November, the ſame month in which Jeruſalem was taken five years before.

[f] Some would place Baruch's journey to Babylon in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, when Baruch was carried into

ſolicit the reſtoration of the ſacred veſſels of the temple, which had been carried away among the ſpoil [G]. It has been objected as inconſiſtent with this account, that Jeruſalem is in this book repreſented as burnt, and in circumſtances of diſtreſs, greater than ſhould ſeem to have occurred at the time that Jehoiakim was taken priſoner and ſlain. But allowing for thoſe aggravations which are cuſtomary in the deſcription of great afflictions, there is no particular in the detail of circumſtances that might not have happened during the ſiege of Jeruſalem in the reign of Jehoiakim: when the Jews might have ſeen part of their city burnt, and have ſuffered from the moſt cruel extremities of famine [H].

It is probable, that Baruch was more immediately commiſſioned by Jeremiah to utter at Babylon thoſe

Egypt; when Jeruſalem and the temple were deſtroyed; when no high-prieſt remained, and no feaſts were celebrated, contrary to the circumſtances of the period of this book. The fifth year cannot be referred to Nebuchadnezzar, who had obtained his empire ſeven years before Jehoiachin was carried into captivity.

[G] The veſſels which Seraias obtained, appear to have been ſilver veſſels, which Zedekiah had made to ſupply the place of the golden veſſels which had been carried away by Nebuchadnezzar, the rapacity of the conquerors having ſoon afterwards ſeized on theſe alſo, vid. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7—10. Jeremiah had declared that the golden veſſels ſhould not be ſoon brought again, chap. xxvii. 16. and the moſt valuable were not reſtored till the expiration of the captivity. Vid. Dan. v. 2. Ezra i. 7. Grotius conſiders the latter part of chap. i. 8. as an interpolation.

[H] Chap. i. 2. ii. 2—5.

prophecies

prophecies which were entruſted to Seraias [I]; and that he actually did read to Jehoiachin, and others whom they concerned, thoſe prophecies contained in the fiftieth and fifty-firſt chapters of Jeremiah, which promiſed deliverance to the Jews from their captivity, and future deſtruction to Babylon; though when Baruch ſpeaks of having read the words of this book to the people by the river Sud [K], he ſeems to allude only to the epiſtle that forms the chief ſubject of this book, which was ſent to Jehoiachin and his aſſociate captives in Babylon, to Joachim, the ſon of Chilcias [L], and the people at Jeruſalem, for Baruch being probably employed to compoſe the letter, may well be conceived to have read it to the King and the Nobles for their approbation.

THE captives, who appear to have been tutored

[I] Jer. li. 59—64.

[K] Chap. i. 4. This river is not mentioned by geographers. As the Hebrew word Sodi, which might have been the original, means Pride, ſome writers have conſidered it as a figurative expreſſion for the Euphrates, on which river the Jewiſh captives were placed. Vid. Jerem. li. 63. Bochart thinks, that the word ſhould be Sori or Suri, (which in the Hebrew is written in nearly the ſame manner) becauſe there was on the banks of the Euphrates, a city called Sura, or Sorat (as alſo Mahaſia) from which that part of the Euphrates might have taken its name. Vid. Bochart. Phaleg. Lib. I. c. ix. Cellarii Geogr. Lib. III. c. xvi. p. 460.

[L] This perſon was probably the ſame with Eliakim, or Hilkiah, who was high-prieſt under Manaſſeth and Joſiah, and perhaps under their ſucceſſors. Vid. Iſaiah xxii. 20. 2 Kings xxii. 4—8. xxiii. 4, 24. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 9. and Calmet. Diſſert. ſur les Grand Pretres.

by

by affliction to a ſenſe of their own unworthineſs, and to have felt a pious ſatisfaction at the ſucceſs of the deputation of Seraias, ſent back with the ſacred veſſels a collection of money to purchaſe burnt-offerings and incenſe for the altar of the Lord; and accompanied it with a letter to their countrymen, in which they expreſſed their ſentiments of humility and repentance, and their confident hopes of that reſtoration which the Prophets had encouraged them to expect, and which prefigured the future glories of Jeruſalem [M].

The letter, which after the ſhort hiſtorical preface, begins at the tenth verſe of the firſt chapter, contains a confeſſion which the captives recommended to their brethren, to be uſed upon ſolemn days. It exhorts them to pray for the life of Nebuchadnezzar, who had complied with their requeſt, and poſſibly been indulgent to the captives; to acknowledge that God's judgments were righteous, and that by their own diſobedience they had provoked the accompliſhment of thoſe curſes which God had threatened [N], and they then experienced; and laſtly, to ſupplicate his mercies with ſorrow and contrition. This prayer was probably uſed, alſo, by the captives themſelves, and the ſentiments which it contains were ſimilar to thoſe which Daniel and Nehemiah continued to inculcate during and after the captivity [O]. In the third

[M] Irenæus Adv. Hæres. Lib. V. c. xxxv.

[N] Deut. xxviii. 15—53. and the Prophets paſſim.

[O] Comp. chap. i. 15, 17. with Dan. ix. 5, 7, 9. Chap. ii. 7—11. with Dan. ix. 13—15. Chap. ii. 15. with Dan. ix. 16.

Chap.

third chapter is contained a paſſage [P], which Grotius haſtily pronounces to be an addition by ſome Chriſtian; and which others conſider as an inſpired prophecy of the incarnation and human intercourſe of the Meſſiah; but which is, perhaps, only an acknowledgment of the divine wiſdom, which had manifeſted itſelf to the Patriarchs, and converſed by revelation with mankind [Q]. It has, however, ſo far a prophetic caſt, as it is imitative of paſſages [R] which, under praiſes of wiſdom, figuratively celebrate that eternal wiſdom which dwelt among us in the perſon of the Son of God. So likewiſe Baruch ſpeaks with an almoſt prophetic confidence of thoſe bleſſings which Jeremiah, and other Prophets might have taught him to expect from "the everlaſting Saviour" who ſhould ſoon appear [S]; of that joy which ſhould come from the Eaſt [T]; and of the triumphant glory with which Jeruſalem ſhould be exalted, and her ſons aſſembled from all kingdoms in righteouſneſs and peace. Theſe, however, were proſpects of future exultation with which all in the

Chap. ii. 19. with Dan. ix. 8. Chap. ii. 7, 9. with Nehem. ix. 32, 34. Chap. ii. 11, 12. with Zech. ix. 10.

[P] Comp. chap. iii. 35—37. with John i. 14.

[Q] Exod. xxiv. 9—18.

[R] Comp. chap. iii. 27. with Prov. viii. 31. The paſſage is perhaps in this reſpect, cited as prophetic by St. Auſtin, who ſays, that it was generally attributed to Jeremiah. Vid. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxxiii.

[S] Chap. iv. 22—30.

[T] Comp. chap. iv. 36, 37. with Jerem. xxiii. 5. and Zech. vi. 12. where the word "Branch" is in the Septuagint rendered Ανατολη, the Eaſt. Vid. alſo, Ezek. xliii. 4. and Mal. iv. 2.

captivity

captivity muſt have conſoled their affliction; they were general characters of the kingdom of the Meſſiah which every one converſant with the ſacred writings was capable of deſcribing, and by no means confer the ſtamp of inſpiration on the book, which was not received as canonical by the Jews or the primitive church of Chriſt [u], though it be cited with reſpect, and even as divine ſcripture by many of the earlier writers [x].

Some, indeed, have imagined, that St. Athanaſius [y], and St. Cyril, received it as canonical. In the catalogues, it is true, of the ſacred books furniſhed by theſe fathers, as alſo in the Greek copies of the canons of the Council of Laodicea, Baruch and the epiſtle are enumerated with Jeremiah and the Lamentations; but it is probable, and generally ſuppoſed, that by this exegetical detail, were meant only thoſe parts of Jeremiah which we receive as inſpired; that the epiſtle in the twenty-ninth chapter of his prophecies is ſpecified as a diſtinct part of the work; and that Baruch is mentioned becauſe he was conſidered as a collector of Jeremiah's writings, and by ſome thought to have added the fifty-ſecond chapter to his prophecies. It is certain, that Baruch and the epiſtle are not mentioned in the catalogue of St. Auſtin, nor in that of the Council of Carthage [z].

[u] Hieron. Præf. in Hierem. & Procem. in Com. Hierem.

[x] Clem. Alex. Pæd. Lib. II. c. iii. Euſeb. Demon. Lib. VI. c. xix. Ambroſe de Fide, Lib. I. c. ii. Hilar. Præf. Com. in Pſalm. Cyril. in Jul.

[y] Athan. Epiſt. 39.

[z] Concil. Carthag. Can. 47. & Cod. Can. Eccleſ. African. Can. 24. in neither of which is Baruch mentioned. It is, however,

It is expreſsly excluded, with the reſt of the apocryphal books from the catalogue received from their anceſtors, by the Greek church [A]; and the members of the Council of Trent were more perplexed, and deliberated longer about the admiſſion of Baruch, than of any of the apocryphal books [B], becauſe they allowed (as it was not in the Latin copies of the catalogue) that it was not received by the Council of Laodicea; by that of Carthage; or by the Roman Pontiffs [C]; and the Tridentine fathers were withheld from rejecting it, only by the conſideration that parts of it were read in the ſervice of the church.

MANY ancient writers have cited Baruch under the name of Jeremiah [D]; not that they believed that what we now poſſeſs under the name of Baruch, was actually compoſed by Jeremiah, but that they conſidered Baruch as a diſciple of the Prophet; and imagined, perhaps, that the epiſtle in the laſt chapter of his book was really written by Jeremiah, to

however, probable, that the council or councils to which theſe canons belonged, received Baruch as canonical in a ſecondary ſenſe; for though it is not mentioned in the liſt, it might be included under the name of Jeremiah, and received as the other apocryphal books.

[A] Metroph. Critopul. Epitom. Confeſſ. Orient.

[B] Hiſtory of the Council of Trent, L. II.

[C] It is not ſpecified in the ſuſpected epiſtle of Pope Innocent the Firſt. Vid. Epiſt. 3. ad Exuper.

[D] Irenæus Hæres. Lib. V. c. xxxv. Clemen. Alex. Pædag. Lib. I. c. x. Chryſoſt. cont. Judæ. Ambroſe in Pſalm cxviii. Octon. 18. Baſil Adver. Eunom. Lib. IV. Epiphan. Hæres. 3. Cyprian. Adv. Judæ. c. i. § 6.

whoſe

whoſe canonical works it was formerly joined. In the Romiſh church, the book is read at the feaſt of Pentecoſt, under the name of Jeremiah [E]; but many of the Romaniſts do not ſcruple to deny its authority [F].

Besides the Greek copy of this book, there are two Syriac verſions, one of which correſponds with, and the other differs much from the Greek [G].

The letter which conſtitutes the ſixth chapter of this book is in ſome editions of the Greek, and in the Arabic which is tranſlated from the Greek, ſubjoined to the Lamentations. It is omitted by Theodoret in his commentary, and is not to be found in ſeveral Greek manuſcripts, and in none of the Hebrew copies of Jeremiah's writings. It is probably a ſpurious work, and is rejected as ſuch by St. Jerom [H]; though cited by Cyprian [I] and others, as an epiſtle of Jeremiah: and ſuppoſed by ſome to be alluded to by the author of the Second Book of Maccabees [K], who, however, only ſpeaks of Jeremiah's general exhortations againſt idolatry. The letter certainly never was in the Jewiſh canon. It was probably fabricated by ſome writer who had ſtudied the character and writings of Jeremiah; and

[E] Office du Samedi de la Pentecote, Prophetic VI.

[F] Driedo Script. & Dogm. ad Eccleſ. Lib. I. cap. ult. Lyran. Dionyſ. Carthus.

[G] The Latin tranſlation alſo differs much from the Greek.

[H] Hieron. Procem. Com. in Hierem. who calls it ψευδεπίγραφον.

[I] Cyprian. de Orat. Domin.

[K] 2 Macc. ii. 1, 2.

it contains judicious and ſpirited ſtrictures againſt idolatry, of which the vanity is forcibly expoſed. There is, beſides theſe works in the Syriac language, an epiſtle attributed to Baruch, which is called his firſt epiſtle; and feigned to have been written to the nine tribes and a half, ſaid to be carried beyond the Euphrates. It appears to be a ſpurious production of a writer acquainted with the Goſpel doctrines; and is interſperſed with many fictitious inventions. It was probably fabricated [L] by ſome of thoſe Monks who during the firſt ages of the Chriſtian church, flocked in numbers to inhabit the deſerts of Syria.

BARUCH, after the execution of his commiſſion, appears to have returned to Jeruſalem; where, in conjunction with Jeremiah, he encountered much perſecution [M], and witneſſed the total deſtruction of Jeruſalem; after which he was drawn by Johanan, with Jeremiah, and the remnant of Judah, into Egypt [N]; from which country he probably never returned; though ſome pretend that he went a ſecond time to Babylon, and died there about A. M. 3428 [O]. In the martyrologies, his death is placed on the 28th of September, apparently without any authority.

[L] Huet. Prop. 4.

[M] Jerem. xliii. 3. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X, c. xi. Hieron. in Eſaiam.

[N] Jerem. xliii. 5—7.

[O] Talm. Megill. cap. i. R. Abrah. Zacut. in Lib. Juchas.

OF

OF THE

SONG OF THE THREE CHILDREN.

IN ſome copies of the Greek verſion of Theodotion, and in the vulgar Latin edition of the Bible, this Book is inſerted between the twenty-third and twenty-fourth verſes of the third chapter of Daniel; as at the beginning of the Book is prefixed, the Hiſtory of Suſannah, and at the end is added, that of the Deſtruction of Bel and the Dragon; but none of theſe additions are to be found in any Hebrew copy, nor do they appear ever to have exiſted in the Hebrew or Chaldaic language [A]. The pretended Hebraiſms which have been alledged to prove their authenticity, are ſuch as an Helleniſtical Jew might be expected to have uſed; or were, perhaps, deſignedly adopted to facilitate the reception of ſpurious works. Theſe apocryphal parts appear to have been firſt inſerted into the Septuagint verſion [B]; and

[A] Origen Epiſt. ad African. p. 14, Edit. Par. Not. A.

[B] The Song of the Three Children is not in the Vatican copy of the Septuagint.

they

they were certainly in Theodotion's edition, though there diſtinguiſhed by an Obelus, to intimate that they were not in the Hebrew. It is probable, that the ſame author invented, or compoſed from traditional accounts, all theſe apocryphal additions, which he interwoved with the genuine work of Daniel. Annexed to, or incorporated with the inſpired book, they gradually roſe into reputation; and being ſafe from cenſure under the ſanction of the Prophet's name, and the approbation of the church, which ſuffered them to be read for inſtruction of manners: they were, perhaps, ſometimes conſidered in a looſe and popular repreſentation, as a part of the genuine work of Daniel.

It is, however, univerſally admitted, that they never were in the Hebrew canon [c], and they were rejected as ſpurious by Euſebius and Apollinarius. St. Jerom, who conſiders them as apocryphal, profeſſes to have retained them with a mark prefixed, leſt he ſhould appear to the unſkilful, to have reſcinded a great part of Daniel's book; ſince, though they were not in the Hebrew, they were generally diſperſed and known [d]; and St. Jerom, under the

[c] Hieron. Præf. in Dan. Calmet's Preface in Dan. Du Pin. Diſſ. Prelim. Lib. I. c. i.

[d] Præf. in Daniel, & Procem. in Com. Dan. when St. Jerom in his apology againſt Ruffinus, profeſſes to have delivered only the ſentiments of the Jews, and not his own, with reſpect to theſe additional parts of Daniel he does not retract his ſentiments, but evades the diſcuſſion of their authority; and as the Scholiaſt obſerves, Vafre reſpondet. Vid. Apol. Adv. Ruff. & Scholia in Præf. ad Dan.

character of a Jew, endeavours to expoſe the abſurdity of ſome particulars which they contain. There can, indeed, be no doubt that they were written long after the time of Daniel, by ſome writer deſirous of imitating and of embelliſhing the ſacred hiſtory, though as they were not expreſsly ſevered from the canonical part by any poſitive decree, they were received by the prepoſterous deciſion of the Council of Trent, as genuine, and in every reſpect canonical [E]. It is uncertain at what time they were compoſed. They are in the Arabic and Syriac verſion of the ſcriptures, and are mentioned very early by Chriſtian writers.

THE preſent book, which contains only a ſong in praiſe of God, ſaid to have been uttered by the three companions of Daniel when thrown by Nebuchadnezzar into a burning furnace, is to be admired for its inſtruction and tendency. Theſe righteous perſons, whoſe reputation was founded on the authentic accounts of Daniel [F], appear by their pious fortitude to have contributed with the Prophet to the final ſuppreſſion of idolatry. The veneration entertained for their character, of which the memory was highly celebrated among the Jews [G], probably in-

[E] Concil. Trid. Seſſ. 4.

[F] Dan. iii. 23.

[G] There was an ancient tradition, that the Three Children were deſcendants of Hezekiah. Vid. Nazianz. Orat. 47. And ſome accounts report, that at laſt they ſuffered martyrdom, as alſo, that their bodies, which had been interred at Babylon, were afterwards removed to Rome. Some Jews at Rome boaſted of a deſcent from them.

duced ſome Helleniſtic Jew to fabricate this ornamental addition to their hiſtory. It muſt have been inſerted at a very early period, as it is cited by many ancient writers [H]. The work is compoſed with great ſpirit, and the ſentiments attributed to the holy children, are conſiſtent with the piety for which they were diſtinguiſhed. The hymn reſembles the 148th Pſalm of David as to its invocation on all the works of creation to praiſe and exalt the Lord. It was ſung in the ſervice of the primitive church; and in the Liturgy of Edward the Sixth, it was enjoined by the Rubrick, that during Lent, the Song of the Three Children ſhould be ſung inſtead of the Te Deum.

[H] Cyprian. de Lapſis, & de Orat. Domin.

OF THE

HISTORY OF SUSANNAH.

THIS hiſtory, which in ſome Greek copies is entitled, the Judgment of Daniel, is ſaid in the ſhort intimation prefixed to the Book by our tranſlators, to have been ſet apart from the beginning of Daniel, where it ſtands in the Roman and other editions of the Greek. The Complutenſian, however, and ſome Latin editions, place it as the thirteenth chapter of that book, though certainly with leſs regard to chronology; for the hiſtory, if founded on truth, muſt be ſuppoſed to have taken place when Daniel was very young, and probably according to ſome accounts [A], not above twelve years of age.

THE Book has no ſufficient pretenſions to be conſidered as canonical. Some writers, indeed, and even Origen, in a ſuſpected epiſtle attributed to him [B], have conceived that it might originally have

[A] Ignat. Epiſt. ad Magneſ. Theodor. in Ezek. cap. i. Sulpit. Sever. Sac. Hiſt. Lib. II. p. 265. Edit. Lug. Bat. 1647.

[B] Origen Epiſt. ad Jul. African.

been written in the Hebrew or Chaldee, and drawn from the canon by the Jews; and that the original copies were induſtriouſly ſuppreſſed by them, becauſe they contained a relation of particulars diſcreditable to the Jewiſh nation. But there is certainly no foundation for this improbable fancy; for not to mention the impracticability of ſuch a meaſure [c], it is evident, that if the Jews could have been tempted by any ſolicitude for their national character to mutilate the ſacred writings, they would rather have expunged thoſe paſſages in the inſpired books which reflect on them the diſgrace, not of individual profligacy, but of general miſconduct; or those which record the crimes and occaſional offences of favourite characters. But we know with what jealous veneration the canon was preſerved inviolate; and perceive in the whole hiſtory of a perverſe and diſobedient people, with what ſincerity they compoſed, and with what fidelity they preſerved the records and annals of their country.

The preſent book appears to have been written in Greek, by ſome Jew who invented the hiſtory, or collected its particulars from traditionary relations, in praiſe of Daniel. And, indeed, the author has been ſuppoſed to betray himſelf to be a Greek, by ſome quibbling alluſions which do not ſeem to apply in any other language than the Greek [d], and which are

[c] See Introduction, p. 12, &c.

[d] When the firſt elder affirms that he beheld Suſannah under a tree called Σχινον, Daniel playing on the word, declares

 that

are not likely to be the conceit of a tranſlator. There are two Syriac verſions, which differ in their contents.

THE hiſtory might, perhaps, have ſome foundation in truth, though it is not mentioned by Joſephus: who, indeed, has not noticed any of the particulars contained in theſe apocryphal additions to the book of Daniel. The Jews in general rejected it as an improbable fable; and remarked, that it was an obvious abſurdity to ſuppoſe that their countrymen in the captivity were in poſſeſſion of the power of inflicting puniſhment on their Judges and Prophets [E]. The Jews had, however, ſome traditional accounts of the ſtory, and many fancied that it was alluded to by Jeremiah, in the twenty-ninth chapter of his book [F] of prophecies: where they ſuppoſed the two elders to be deſcribed under the names of Zedekiah and Ahab: though theſe perſons are there ſaid to have been put to death by the King of Babylon. Origen, who defends the truth of the account [G], maintains that the Jews were ſuffered to continue in the exerciſe of their own judicial laws during the captivity; and, indeed, they appear to have experienced, in many reſpects, conſiderable in-

that the angel ſhould Σχισαι, cut him in two; and when the ſecond repreſents the tree to have been πρινον, Daniel denounces his ſentence by an expreſſion from which πρινον was derived, πρισαι.

[E] Hieron. in Hierem. ch. xxix. 22.

[F] Chap. xxix. 22, 23.

[G] Epiſt. ad African. Tract. 31. in Matt. Athan. Synopſ. Sixt. Senens. Lib. V.

dulgence

dulgence from their conquerors. Origen adds likewiſe, as a confirmation of the veracity of the account, that he had heard from a Jew, as a popular notion, that the elders attempted to ſeduce Suſannah by aſſurances that the Meſſiah ſhould ſpring from them: to which prophane dealing Daniel is ſuppoſed to allude in the fifty-ſeventh verſe.

THE book ſeems to have been received by the Chriſtian church as containing a relation not inconſiſtent with the ſacred hiſtory, but not as the production of Daniel; though as forming an appendage to his work, and containing an account of circumſtances in which he was concerned, it was ſometimes cited under his name [H]: and being read by the church, was conſidered with reverence. Africanus, however, in his epiſtle to Origen, repreſents it as confeſſedly ſpurious; and Origen himſelf allows that it had no canonical authority [I]. Euſebius and Apollinarius, in anſwer to Porphyry, conſider it as a part of the prophecy of Habakkuk, the ſon of Jeſus, of the tribe of Levi: for which, however, they do not appear to have any authority, except that of the Greek title prefixed to Bel and the Dragon: which probably belonged excluſively to that book [K]. It is received, together with the other ſpurious additions, as canonical by the Romiſh

[H] Irenæus Hæres. Lib. IV. c. xliv. Tertull. de Coron. Milit. c. iv. Cyprian. Epiſt. 43. Ambroſe in c. xiii. Dan.

[I] Origen. Epiſt. ad Jul. African. & Grabe de Vitiis Sept. Interpret.

[K] Huet. Prop. 4. in Dan.

church; but is ſuffered to continue in our Bibles only as a work from which moral improvement may be drawn. It illuſtrates the confidence of truth, and the ſecurity of innocence. It exhibits by an inſtructive contraſt, chaſtity in its moſt attractive colours, and licentiouſneſs in its moſt hideous form.

OF

OF THE

HISTORY OF BEL AND THE DRAGON.

THIS Book, which in Theodotion's verſion of Daniel, and in the Vulgate is annexed as a fourteenth chapter to the book of Daniel, is properly rejected by our church: having never been in the Hebrew canon, or received as authentic by the earlier Chriſtians. In the Septuagint verſion of the ſcriptures, into which theſe ſpurious parts of Daniel appear to have been firſt foiſted, there was prefixed to this book a title, in which it was called, the Prophecy of Habakkuk, the ſon of Jeſus, of the tribe of Levi [A]; whence ſome attributed the book to the Prophet whoſe inſpired work is now extant in the canon; but he lived much earlier than the period which muſt be aſſigned to this hiſtory, if its truth be admitted. There is reaſon, however, to ſuſpect that this title was a ſubſequent addition by ſome perſon

[A] Hieron. Procem. Comm. in Dan. Sixt. Senens. Bib. Lib. I.

who

who attributed the book to Habakkuk, on account of the agency which is aſſigned to him in the hiſtory; and Theodotion was induced, probably, in conſequence of ſuch ſuſpicion, to change the title in his edition, though he ſubſtituted with as little reaſon, that of Daniel. If, however, the author's name really were Habakkuk, he was in all probability ſome Helleniſtical Jew, or, at leaſt, a different perſon from the ſacred writer.

It is moſt reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the book was never extant in the Hebrew language, though it might, as Lightfoot [B] has conceived, be a parabolical ſtory, founded on a paſſage in Jeremiah [C], who threatens puniſhment to Bel, the great national idol of Babylon [D], in terms that might have ſuggeſted the circumſtances of his deſtruction as deſcribed in this book.

It is certain, that in all theſe apocryphal additions, the ſame Daniel was meant as the Prophet whoſe writings we poſſeſs in the canon: though annexed to the ſuſpected title before-mentioned, which, accord-

[B] Lightfoot Stud. p. 12.

[C] Jerem. li. 44. Seld. Syntag. II. de Belo & Dragon.

[D] Bel was originally Belus, the ſucceſſor of Nimrod, ſaid to be the firſt deified man; his ſon Ninus having erected a ſtatue, and preſcribed worſhip to him: which was the beginning of idolatry. From Bel was derived the Hebrew idol Baal. Vid. Hieron. in Ezech. xxiii. & in Oſee xi. The magnificent temple of Bel, with other particulars relative to his worſhip, is ſpoken of by Herodotus and other hiſtorians. Vid. Herod. Lib. I. Diodor. L. III. c. x.

ing

ing to St. Jerom, was in the Septuagint copies [E], there is an exordium, or, as it were, a firſt verſe, which deſcribes Daniel improperly as a prieſt, the ſon of Obadiah, a gueſt of the King of Babylon: and inconſiſtently with the ſacred accounts of the Prophet, by which Daniel appears to have been of the tribe of Judah. Still, however, as that title and exordium were probably ſubſequent additions, we may conceive the author of this book to ſpeak of the Prophet Daniel; but not as ſome have imagined, that he gives us only an enlarged account of the events related in the ſixth chapter of the authentic book of Daniel: for the circumſtances are totally different, except in the particular of his being thrown into the lions den; and the hiſtory recorded in the ſacred account is aſſigned to the reign of Darius: whereas in the firſt verſe of this book, which undoubtedly is properly placed [F], the events appear to be aſſigned to the reign of Cyrus [G].

MANY

[E] St. Jerom calls the book, on account of this inſcription, ψευδεπιγραφον, "falſely intitled." It is rejected as apocryphal under the title of the Book of Habakkuk, by the author of the Synopſis attributed to Athanaſius.

[F] As it ſtands in the Arabic, Syriac, and Alexandrian copies.

[G] It muſt be obſerved, that the author in this verſe ſpeaks of Cyrus as of the immediate ſucceſſor of Aſtyages: agreeably to the account of Herodotus and his followers. But it is certain from prophane and ſacred hiſtory, that there was an intermediate King of Media who reigned two years, called Cyaxares, by Xenophon; and Darius, by Joſephus and Daniel.

MANY perſons object to the improbability of the circumſtances related in this book: as particularly to the deſtruction of the Dragon [H], and to the conveyance of Habakkuk from Jeruſalem to Babylon, merely to furniſh a dinner to Daniel. The book, indeed, though it be cited as hiſtorical by the moſt reſpectable writers in the earlieſt ages of the church [I], is conſidered as fabulous by St. Jerom; and it muſt be allowed to contain ſome extraordinary and incredible relations. It is, however, canonized

niel. Vid. Xenophon. Cyropæd. Lib. I. c. xix. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. c. xii. Dan. v. 31. Meſſieurs Du Port Royal, on an idea that the particulars recorded in this book, are ſuch as were not likely to have occurred under Aſtyages, Darius, or Cyrus, aſſign the hiſtory to the beginning of the reign of Evil-Merodach, the ſon of Nebuchadnezzar, placing it about A. M. 3442.

[H] By the dragon is to be underſtood a ſerpent, of which, to the triumph of our great deceiver, the worſhip prevailed among many nations in early times. Vid. Ælian. de Animal. Lib. XI. c. xvii. & Lib. XVII. c. v. Origen cont. Celſ. Lib. VI. Valer. Max. i. 8. Ovid. Metam. Lib. XV. Wiſd. xi. 15. Fragm. Philo, tom. ii. p. 646. Stillingfl. Orig. Sac. B. III. c. iii. Meſſrs. du Port Royal ſuppoſe, that the Dragon was burſt, not by any ſpecific power of the compoſition, but by the ſuffocation which it occaſioned in a narrow throat. Vid. Seld. Syntag. II. de Bel & Drag. c. xvii. Ben Gorion gives a very different account of the deſtruction. Vid. Lib. I. c. x. ap. Seld. Syntag. II. c. xvii.

[I] Irenæus Hæres. Lib. IV. c. xi. Tertull. de Jejun. adv. Pſychicos, c. viii. De Idolat. c. xviii. Cyprian. de Exhort. Martyrii. de Orat. Domin. & de Oper. & Elemoſyn. Ambroſe de Jacob. & Vit. beat. c. viii. & in Epiſt. ad Rom. i. 23.

by

by the Council of Trent. Daniel, probably by detecting the mercenary contrivances of the idolatrous prieſts at Babylon, and by opening the eyes of the people to the follies of that ſuperſtition into which they had been ſeduced, might have furniſhed ſome foundation for the hiſtory; and the writer of the book appears to have introduced ſome additional circumſtances to enliven the narration; and to illuſtrate the providence of God in protecting and providing for thoſe who adhere to his ſervice.

or

OF THE

PRAYER OF MANASSETH.

THIS ſhort prayer is inſcribed to Manaſſeth, and is ſaid to have been compoſed by him during the captivity at Babylon: where, agreeably to God's threats by his Prophets [A], he was carried in fetters, by Eſarhaddon, King of Aſſyria and Babylon [B], in the twenty-ſecond year of his reign, A. M. 3227 [C]; and where, according to ſome traditionary accounts, being ſeverely treated by the conqueror [D], and having vainly intreated protection from the falſe deities whom he worſhipped, he remembered the advice which he had received from his father in the words of Moſes, "When thou art in tribulation, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, he

[A] 2 Kings xxi. 12—16.

[B] Prid. Connect. A. 680. Manaſſ. XIX.

[C] 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.

[D] Some writers fabulouſly relate, that he was ſhut up in an heated brazen calf, that on the Prayer of Manaſſeth the image burſt, and he was carried by an angel to Jeruſalem. Eutich. Alexand. Annal.

will

will not forſake thee, neither deſtroy thee [E]." It appears from the ſacred hiſtory, that he was awakened by his afflictions to a due ſenſe of his crimes, and induced to turn with humility and repentance to the God of his fathers; and that he prayed unto the Lord, who was intreated of him, and heard his ſupplication, and brought him again after a ſhort captivity to his kingdom, into Jeruſalem; where, as he continued ſtedfaſt in his adherence to God, and zealouſly laboured to extirpate idolatry, he enjoyed a long reign of proſperity and peace; being permitted to continue on the throne fifty-five years [F]; which was a longer period than was allowed to any preceding or ſubſequent King; and an indulgence which ſerves to illuſtrate the efficacy of that contrition of which the ſacred writers ſtrongly inculcate the neceſſity, and minutely detail the effects.

THE Prayer in our Bibles, though it contain nothing inconſiſtent with the circumſtances and period of Manaſſeth, is not ſuppoſed to be the authentic production of that Monarch. The prayer which he is related in the book of Chronicles to have uttered, is there ſaid to have been written in the book of the Kings of Iſrael, and in the ſayings of the Seers [G]; in

[E] Deut. iv. 30, 31. Tradit. Hebr. in Paralip. & Targum in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.

[F] 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1, 12, 13. & Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. c. iv.

[G] 2 Chron. xxxiii. 19. Or of Hoſai, as it is rendered in the margin of our Bibles. The word Hozai ſignifies Seers,

in ſome larger and uninſpired records which have periſhed. The preſent work is not in any of the Hebrew copies. It is uncertain in what language it was originally compoſed; but it cannot be traced higher than in the Vulgate, into which, probably, or into ſome Greek copies, it was inſerted by ſome writer deſirous of ſupplying the loſs of the authentic prayer. It was not received as genuine by any of the Fathers or Councils, and was rejected even by the Council of Trent.

It is, however, written in a ſtile of much piety and humility: and the Greek church has inſerted it into its euchology, or collection of prayers. The author of it ſpeaks of repentance as requiſite to ſinners, in a manner ſimilar to the declaration made by our Saviour: that he came not to call the juſt, but ſinners to repentance [H].

as the Seventy render it. Some underſtand it to be the name of a Prophet, and ſome have thought that Iſaiah is meant. The Syriac reads Hanan, the Arabic Saphan. Vid. Grot.

[H] Matt. ix. 13.

OF

OF THE

FIRST BOOK OF THE MACCABEES.

THE Firſt Book of the Maccabees contains a collection of hiſtorical particulars relating to the Jews, from the beginning of the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, A. M. 3829, to the death of Simon the high-prieſt, A. M. 3869. It is ſuppoſed to have been originally written in the Hebrew, or rather in the Chaldaic language of the Jeruſalem dialect, as uſed by the Jews after the return from captivity. The author is by ſome thought to have been John Hyrcanus, the ſon of Simon; who was a prince and high-prieſt of the Jews near thirty years, and who began his government at the period at which this hiſtory concludes. Joſephus [A], indeed, informs us, that the high-prieſts were intruſted with the care of writing the annals of their country; and at the period of the Maccabees, great attention ſeems to have been paid to preſerve them [B]. The author

[A] Cont. Apion, Lib. I.
[B] 1 Macc. xvi. 14. 2 Macc. ii. 14.

of the present book, who was probably some person publickly appointed to digest the history: appears to have had recourse to the national records, and sometimes refers to them [C]. He reckons from a Greek æra, but according to the Hebrew mode of computation [D]. St. Jerom professes to have seen the book in the Hebrew, under the title of "Sharbit Sar Bene El [E]," that is, "the sceptre of the Prince of the children of God;" a title which obviously alludes to Judas, the valiant defender of God's persecuted people. This original is, however, now lost. The Greek version, from which our English translation was made, is denominated Maccabees, from the persons whose actions are described in the book. It was probably executed before the time of Theodotion, for it appears to have been used by authors, his contemporaries [F]. In the Paris and London Polyglots, there are two Syriac versions of both the books of the Maccabees, which were made from the Greek, though they differ from it in some respects.

THE two books of the Maccabees were certainly composed after the succession of Prophets had ceased

[C] Chap. xvi. 24.

[D] The author calculates from the month Nisan, (March or April) the Greeks reckon from October.

[E] שרביט סרבני אל, Σαρβηθ Σαρβανε ελ. Vid. Origen. Com. in Psalm. vol. i. p. 47. ap. Euseb. Lib. VI. c. xxv. Hieron. Prol. Gal. Some read שרביט שר בני אל, "the scepter of the rebels against the Lord." Vid. Drus. Præf. in Lib. Vet. Test.

[F] As by Origen and Tertullian.

among

among the Jews [G]; and were never reckoned by them in the catalogue of the ſacred writings. They are not cited by our Saviour, or his apoſtles; and were conſidered as apocryphal by the primitive church, ſince they are not mentioned in the liſt of the canonical books furniſhed by Melito, the Council of Laodicea, Hilary, and Cyril of Jeruſalem [H]; they are expreſsly repreſented as books of a ſecondary rank by many very ancient writers [I]; and were received as ſuch by St. Auſtin, and the Council of Carthage [K]; notwithſtanding which, they were pronounced to be in every reſpect canonical by the Council of Trent.

THIS firſt book is cited as a reſpectable hiſtory by the fathers [L]. It was probably written by a contemporary author, who had, in part, witneſſed the ſcenes which he ſo minutely and graphically deſcribes; and who wrote under a lively impreſſion of the revolutions which his country had recently ex-

[G] 1 Macc. iv. 46. ix. 27. xiv. 41. Joſeph. cont. Apion. Lib. I. Parker's Introduct. ad Bib. Voſſius, Kidder, &c.

[H] Preface to the Apocryphal Books, p. 514, notes M and N.

[I] Origen in Pſa. i. & ap. Euſeb. Hiſt. Lib. VI. c. xxv. Athan. Synop. Hieron. Præf. in Prov. Salomon. Gregor. Mag. Moral. Expoſ. in Job. Lib. XIX. c. xvii. Junil. African. de Part. Div. Leg. Lib. I. c. iii.

[K] Auguſt. de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVIII. c. xxxvi. Concil. Carthag. 3. Can. 47. In the printed copies of the pretended decree of Pope Gelaſius, only one book of the Maccabees is mentioned.

[L] Tertull. Adv. Jud. c. iv. Cyprian. de Exhort. Martyr. § 5. Teſt. Lib. III. § 4. § 15. § 53.

perienced. It is compoſed, at leaſt, with great accuracy and ſpirit, and perhaps approaches nearer to the ſtile of ſacred hiſtory than any work now extant. St. John has been thought to ſubſtantiate the truth of a relation herein furniſhed [M]; and Joſephus appears to have copied moſt of its accounts into his Jewiſh antiquities; and though the author has been repreſented in a few inſtances as betraying ſome ignorance in treating of foreign affairs [N], yet in other reſpects, many heathen writers corroborate his reports.

THE book contains the hiſtory of Mattathias, and of his family, and of the wars which they at the head of their countrymen maintained againſt the Kings of Syria, in the defence of their religion and lives. From the death of Alexander, who had conquered Perſia, and the countries dependent on that empire [O], Judæa followed the fate of Syria; and for a ſpace of near one hundred and fifty years was

[M] S. John repreſents Jeſus to have been preſent at the feaſt of the dedication: by which has been underſtood the feaſt of the dedication of the altar, of which the inſtitution is recorded in this book. Some have thought, that as this feaſt commenced on the twenty-fifth of December, it might have been pre-ordained with a reference to our Saviour's birth. The Jews celebrated this feaſt, which they called the feaſt of the lights, for eight days, with illuminations and great joy. Vid. John x. 22. 1 Macc. iv. 56—59. Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XII. c. xi.

[N] Chap. i. 5, 6. viii. 6, 7. Rainold's Cenſur. Apoc. Prælect. 98, 104.

[O] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XI. c. viii.

-expoſed

expoſed to all the ambitious conteſts which prevailed between the Kings of Syria and Egypt. After various revolutions, and alternate ſubjection to each of theſe kingdoms; and after having occaſionally ſuffered all the oppreſſion and exactions that tyranny could enforce by means of the high-prieſts, and thoſe princes who were appointed by the intereſt, and ſubject to the control of the conquerors, Judæa was at the time that this hiſtory begins, a tributary province of Syria, under Antiochus Epiphanes; and cruelly harraſſed and pillaged by him. The ſevere perſecution which he exerciſed, and his avowed deſigns, which tended to exterminate the religion, and, indeed, the whole nation of the Jews [P]: inflamed the zeal of Mattathias to reſentment and revolt; and upon his death excited Judas, in compliance with the dying injunctions of his father, to attempt the deliverance of his country. The ſucceſſive victories, and prudent conduct of Judas and his brethren, which effected the accompliſhment of their deſigns, conſtitute the chief ſubject of the preſent book. The relation affords a lively picture of a nation inſpired by the patriotic heroiſm of its leaders, and ſtruggling with enthuſiaſm for civil and religious liberty. It repreſents Judas and his brethren, anxious to "reſtore the decayed eſtate of the people," and to purify the polluted ſanctuary of their God: as endeavouring by meaſures concerted in piety, and conducted with ſteady fortitude, to conciliate the divine

[P] Chap. i. 44—64. iii. 34—36.

countenance. It deſcribes, likewiſe, the gradual recovery of Judæa from deſolation and miſeries to importance and proſperity [Q], and at the ſame time the worſhip of the true God re-eſtabliſhed on the ruins of idolatry.

THE author, like the ſacred hiſtorians, ſelects individual characters for conſideration, and deſcribes the miſconduct as well as the virtues of his heroes. He treats of the affairs of other nations only ſo far as connected with the circumſtances of the Jewiſh hiſtory; and exhibits the changes and viciſſitudes of other governments, as they tended to affect the intereſts of his country.

THE particulars recorded in the book, often afford a key to prophecy [R], and eſpecially explain the myſterious viſions contained in the eighth and eleventh chapters of Daniel, relating to the horn, by which emblem was preſignified Antiochus [S],

[Q] Chap. i. 25—28. iii. 42—51. comp. with chap. x. xii. 19—23. xiv. 8—23. xv. 1—9, 24, 32.

[R] Comp. 1 Macc. x. 88, 89. with Zech. ix. 14—18. and Jackſon's works, tom. ii. p. 844. Vid. alſo, 1 Macc. vii. 17. where the ſecond and third verſes of Pſalm lxxix. are cited, either by way of accommodation to the circumſtances before deſcribed; or as intentionally prophetic (perhaps in a ſecondary ſenſe,) of the ſlaughter effected by Alcimus. The Hebrew word Chaſidim, indeed, which is tranſlated ſaints in the ſecond verſe of the Pſalm, has been conſidered as deſcriptive of the Aſſideans, who were eminently pious. The Pſalm might, perhaps, have been hiſtorical of the calamities occaſioned by Nebuchadnezzar, and yet like many others, have borne a prophetic aſpect to future circumſtances.

[S] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. X. c. xi. Hieron. in Dan. c. viii.

who

who ſet up the abomination of deſolation on the altar [t].

MATTATHIAS, the father of Judas, was of the ſacerdotal race, of the courſe of Joarib [u]; and as is generally ſuppoſed, a deſcendant of Phinehas, the ſon of Eleazar, to whom God had given the covenant of an everlaſting prieſthood [x]. He himſelf does not appear to have enjoyed that exalted office [y]; though it was conferred on his ſons; and reſtricted as an excluſive privilege to his deſcendants till the typical office was virtually evacuated by the inſtitution of a ſpiritual prieſthood in the time of Herod; who, except in the caſe of Ariſtobulus, the grandſon of Hyrcanus, did not reſpect the pretenſions of the Aſmonæan family, but conceded the prieſthood to any of the ſacerdotal lineage [z].

[t] Chap. i. 54, 55. By the abomination of deſolation, which as Daniel had predicted was ſet up on the altar, we may underſtand the idol that was placed there by order of Antiochus. It is ſuppoſed to have been the ſtatue of Jupiter Olympius. Vid. 2 Macc. vi. 2. Idols in ſcripture are commonly called abominations. Vid. 1 Kings xi. 5, 7. And the idol might be ſaid to make deſolate, as it expelled the worſhip of the true God, and occaſioned the deſtruction of his ſervants. Comp. Dan. xi. 31. with 1 Macc. i. 54. and 2 Macc. vi. 1, 2.

[u] Chap. ii. 1. or Jahoiarib. This was the firſt of the twenty-four courſes which ſerved in the temple. Vid. 1 Chron. xxiv. 7.

[x] Numb. xxv. 11—13. 1 Macc. ii. 54. Jurieu's Critic. Hiſt. vol. i. Part III. c. i. p. 372.

[y] Calmet. Dict. Word Mattathias.

[z] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XX. c. viii.

JUDAS, whoſe exploits are celebrated in this hiſtory, has been thought to have derived his title of Maccabæus from the initial letters of the four words with which his ſtandard is ſuppoſed to have been decorated [A], and which were taken from the eleventh verſe of the fifteenth chapter of Exodus, "Mi Camo-ka Baelim Jehovah;" Who is like unto thee among the gods, O Jehovah? From this Judas his deſcendants were called Maccabees. They were called, likewiſe, Aſmonæans, either becauſe, as Joſephus informs us, Mattathias was a deſcendant of Aſmonæus [B]; or by an honourable and eminent diſtinction, as the Hebrew word ſignifies princes [C]. Many writers maintain, that they were deſcended maternally from the race of Judah [D],

[A] Others who think that Judas was named Maccabæus before he erected his ſtandard; or who collect from monuments that a lion was imprinted on the ſtandard of the Maccabees, derive the word Maccabæus from מכה בי, "per me eſt plaga." Vid. Godwyn de Repub. Jud. Lib. I. c. i. Some derive it from Macchabeth, or Macchubeth, "hidden," becauſe Mattathias and his companions concealed themſelves in the wilderneſs. Vid. chap. ii. 28—31. Others, laſtly, derive it from Makke-Baiah, which ſignifies "Conqueror in the Lord." Vid. Prid. An. 167. & Calmet. on 1 Macc. ii. 4. Ben Gorion, L. III. c. 9.

[B] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XII. c. viii.

[C] Charchamanim. Vid. Pſalm lxvii. 32. It is rendered πρεσβεις, in the Septuagint of Pſalm lxvii. p. 31. Vid. Kimchi. Druſ. Præf. in Maccab. Euſeb. Demonſt. Evang. Lib. VIII.

[D] Hieron. in Oſee, cap. iii. in Sophon. c. i. Auguſt. cont. Fauſt. Lib. I. c. lxxii. &c. Preface to Hiſt. Books, p. 133, note o.

Ariſtobulus,

Ariſtobulus, the ſon of Hyrcanus, was the firſt who aſſumed the title of King after the captivity. He bequeathed the crown to his ſon, after whoſe death it was a ſubject of conteſt to his children; and on the capture of Hyrcanus the Elder, by the Parthians, conferred by the Romans on Herod [E].

[E] Sulpit. Sever. S. Hiſt. L. II.

OF THE

SECOND BOOK OF THE MACCABEES.

THIS Book contains a compilation of hiſtorical records extracted from different works; but eſpecially an abridgment of an hiſtory of the perſecutions of Epiphanes, and Eupator [A] againſt the Jews, which had been written in Greek in five books, by an Helleniſtical Jew of Cyrene, named Jaſon: a deſcendant probably of thoſe Jews who had been placed there by Ptolemy Soter [B], and which is no longer extant. The name of the compiler is not known. He was doubtleſs a different perſon from the author of the preceding book. He dates from an æra ſix months later than that choſen by him, and not only writes with leſs accuracy, and

[A] Chap. ii. 19—29. Clemens Alexandrinus calls it the epitome of the Maccabaic hiſtory. Vid. Strom. L. V. p. 595.

[B] Prid. Con. Par. I. B. VIII, An. 320. The Cyreneans were of Greek extraction. Callimachus, the Poet of Cyrene, wrote in Greek. Joſeph. Antiq. L. XIV. c. xiii. L. XVI. c. x.

in

in a more florid ſtile, but likewiſe relates ſome particulars in a manner inconſiſtent with the accounts of the firſt book [c]; from which, nevertheleſs, he has in other inſtances borrowed both ſentiments and facts. Some writers have attributed this ſecond book to Philo of Alexandria [d]; and others to Joſephus, on grounds equally conjectural and fallacious. Neither Euſebius nor St. Jerom ſpeak of it as among the works of Philo; and the diſcourſe of the Maccabees, or the Empire of Reaſon, which Euſebius and St. Jerom ſuppoſe to have been written by Joſephus [e], is a very different work, though it mentions many particulars contained in this book.

Serarius [f] maintained that the Second Book of Maccabees was the production of Judas, the Eſ-

[c] Comp. 1 Macc. vi. 13—16. with 2 Macc. i. 16. and ix. 28. 1 Macc. ix. 3, 18. with 2 Macc. i. 10. 1 Macc. iv. 36. with 2 Macc. x. 2, 3. & Uſher.

[d] Honor. Auguſtod. de Scriptor. Eccl. in Philone.

[e] Euſeb. Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib. III. c. x. Hieron. adv. Pelag. Lib. I. c. iii. & Lib. de Script. Eccleſ. in Joſeph. This book, whether properly or improperly attributed to Joſephus, is entitled, εις Μακκαβαιες λογος, η περι αυτοκραλορος λογισμος. The word Maccabees being applied to all who diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the cauſe of religion and freedom; and ſometimes, as in this inſtance, to thoſe who flouriſhed before the time of Judas. Vid. Scaliger in Chron. Euſeb. n. 1853, p. 143. The work of Joſephus is a rhetorical declamation on the power of reaſon, acting on religious principles; in which the author illuſtrates his ſubject by a deſcription of the conduct and ſpeeches of Eleazar, and the other martyrs whoſe fortitude is celebrated in this ſecond book of Maccabees.

[f] Serar. Prol. II. in Macc. & Rupert. de Vict. Verb.

ſenian,

ſenian, who is deſcribed by Joſephus [G] as a man of great authority for his wiſdom; who, likewiſe, according to the hiſtorian's account was endowed with the infallible ſpirit of prophecy [H], and predicted the death of Antigonus, the ſecond ſon of John Hyrcanus the Prieſt; and whom Serarius imagines to be mentioned in the fourteenth verſe of the ſecond chapter of this book. But that paſſage is generally allowed to relate to Judas Maccabæus; and affords no light with reſpect to the author of this book. It is with more probability, though with equal uncertainty aſſigned to Simon, or Judas Maccabæus; while ſome have fanſied that the whole book is only a letter written by the ſynagogue of Jeruſalem to the Jews in Egypt: not diſtinguiſhing the hiſtorical from the epiſtolary parts [I]. By whomſoever it was compoſed, it ſhould ſeem to have been originally written in Greek; and the compiler, as well as the author, whoſe work he abridged, follows the Syrian mode of computation, reckoning by the years of the Seleucidæ [K].

THE two epiſtles which are contained in the firſt and ſecond chapters, and which are there ſaid to have been written by the Jews at Jeruſalem to their

[G] Joſeph. Antiq. Lib. XIII. c. xix.

[H] Joſeph. de Bell. Jud. Lib. I. c. iii.

[I] Genebr. Chronol. Coteler. Not. ad Can. Apoſt. p. 338.

[K] Prideaux conceives, that the compiler muſt have been an Egyptian Jew, ſince he ſeems to have acknowledged the leſſer temple in Egypt, for he diſtinguiſhes the temple at Jeruſalem as "the great temple." Vid. chap. ii. 19. xiv. 13.

brethren

brethren at Alexandria, exhorting them to obſerve the feaſt of the Tabernacles, and that of the Purification, are by Prideaux conſidered as ſpurious; the ſecond, indeed, is ſaid to have been written by Judas, who was not living at the time of the date [L]; and it contains many extravagant and fabulous particulars. It begins at the tenth verſe of the firſt chapter, and terminates with the eighteenth of the ſecond; from thence to the end of the chapter is a ſhort preface of the compiler to the abridgment of Jaſon's hiſtory; which commences with the third chapter, and concludes with the thirty-ſeventh verſe of the fifteenth chapter, the two laſt verſes forming a kind of concluſion to the work.

THE book contains an hiſtory of about fifteen years, from the enterprize of Heliodorus in the temple, A. M. 3828, to the victory of Judas Maccabæus againſt Nicanor, A. M. 3843. The chapters are not, however, arranged exactly in chronological order. The book begins at a period ſomewhat earlier than that of the firſt book of Maccabees. As the author appears at firſt to have intended only an epitome of the hiſtory of Judas Maccabæus and his brethren, with ſome contemporary events [M], the account of the puniſhment of Heliodorus, which occurred under Seleucus, the predeceſſor of Epiphanes, as well as the circumſtances related in the two laſt chapters which happened under Demetrius Sotor, the ſuc-

[L] Com. 1 Macc. ix. 3, 18. with 2 Macc. i. 10.
[M] Chap. ii. 19—23.

ceſſor

ceſſor of Eupator, have been ſometimes repreſented as ſubſequent additions by ſome later writer. But ſince theſe events as connected with the time of Judas, were not irrelative to the author's deſign: there is no reaſon, except from a pretended difference of ſtile, to diſpute their authenticity as a part of Jaſon's hiſtory: or, at leaſt, as a genuine addition affixed to the epitome by the compiler. The author had no title, any more than the writer of the preceding book, to be conſidered as an inſpired hiſtorian: he ſpeaks, indeed, of his own performance in the diffident ſtile of one conſcious of the fallibility of his own judgment, and diſtruſtful of his own powers [N]. His work was never conſidered as ſtrictly canonical till received into the ſacred liſt by the Council of Trent, though examples are produced from it by many ancient writers [O]. It muſt be allowed to be a valuable and inſtructive hiſtory; and affords an intereſting deſcription of a perſecuted and afflicted people: furniſhing in the relation of the conduct of Eleazar, and of the woman and her children who ſuffered for their attachment to their religion, an example of conſtancy, that might have animated the martyrs of the chriſtian church. The

[N] Chap. xv. 38. which is written in the ſtile of an uninſpired writer, and reſembles the concluſion of the oration of Æſchines againſt Cteſipho. Vid. Preface to 1 Macc. p. 625, 626.

[O] Ambroſe de Jacob, & Vita Beat. c. x. xi. xii. & Lib. de Offic. c. xl. xli. Auguſt. de cur. gerend. pro Mortuis, L. I. § 3.

author

author induſtriouſly di[illegible]s the confidence in a reſurrection and future life [illegible] which prevailed at the period of his hiſtory, and wh[illegible] was the encouragement that enabled thoſe who [illegible]re ſo ſeverely tried, to ſuſtain their tortures. He like wiſe, perhaps, more particularly enforced the doctrine of a reſurrection with a deſign to counteract the propagation of the Sadducean principles, which were then riſing into notice.

It has been thought to detract from the credibility of the particulars recorded in this book, that neither the author of the preceding work, nor Joſephus in thoſe his acknowledged writings, where he treats of the perſecution carried on by Antiochus [Q], ſhould mention the ſufferings of the martyrs whoſe memorial is here celebrated. But the ſilence of theſe hiſtorians can furniſh no ſufficient argument to deny that there was, at leaſt, ſome ground-work for the account of this book, with whatever exaggerations we may ſuppoſe it to have been decorated. The deſcription, likewiſe, of the prodigies and meteorological conflicts which portended calamities to Judæa, ought not to invalidate our confidence in the veracity of the writer of this book; ſince it is unqueſtionable from the teſtimony of reſpectable hiſtorians [R]; and, indeed, from the evidence of holy writ [S]: that ſuch ominous appearances have ſome-

[P] Chap. vii. 9, 11, 14, 23, 29, 36. & xiv. 46.
[Q] De Bell. Jud. L. I. Joſeph. Antiq. L. XII. c. v.
[R] Joſeph. de Bell. Jud. Lib. VII. c. xii.
[S] Luke xxi. 25.

times

times been witneſſed. And when, as in this inſtance, the phænomena are repreſented by an hiſtorian, perhaps nearly contemporary, to have continued forty days [T]: it is unreaſonable to ſuſpect deluſion, or wilful miſrepreſentation. So, likewiſe, however improbable thoſe accounts may appear, in which God is deſcribed to have vindicated the inſulted ſanctity of his temple [U]; and to have diſcountenanced the adverſaries of his people by apparitions and angelical viſions [X]; it is certain, that many philoſophical and judicious writers have maintained the reality of ſimilar appearances [Y]; and that the popular ſuperſtitions and belief in ſuch apparitions may, without credulity, be ſuppoſed to have originated in the miraculous interpoſitions which were ſometimes diſplayed in favour of the Jewiſh people [Z].

BUT though the book may, perhaps, be vindicated in general, with reſpect to hiſtorical truth, it contains ſome parts of exceptionable character; and ſome paſſages in it have been objected to as of dangerous example [A]. The Romaniſts, indeed, who in deference to the deciſion of the Tridentine fathers, admit the canonical authority of the book, have

[T] Chap. v. 1—3.

[U] Chap. iii. 24—29.

[X] Chap. x. 29, 30. xi. 8.

[Y] Cicero Tuſcul. Quæſt. L. I. & de Natur. Deor. L. II.

[Z] Joſhua v. 13.

[A] Chap. i. 18—36. & Rainold's Cenſur. Apocryph. tom. ii. Prælect. 133, 134. Vid. alſo, chap. xiv. 41—46. where the furious attempt of Razis to fall on his own ſword is ſpoken of with ſeeming approbation.

produced the laſt verſes of the twelfth chapter to countenance their notions concerning purgatory and prayers for the dead [B].

The work, as the production of a fallible and unenlightened man, may contain a mixture of error; and certainly ſhould be read with that diſcretion which, while it ſeeks inſtruction, guards againſt the intruſion of falſe and pernicious opinions. If St. Paul, in his eulogium on ſome illuſtrious examples of faith, ſhould be thought to have eſtabliſhed the truth, or approved the examples of this hiſtory, he by no means bears teſtimony to the inſpiration of its author [C]; or eſtabliſhes its general authority in point of doctrine. The apoſtles conſigned for the direction of the chriſtian church, the productions of only thoſe

[B] Bellarm. de Purgat. Lib. II. c. iii. Some think that Judas is commended for having prayed, not for the dead, but that the guilt of the dead might not be imputed to the living; but though the Greek be leſs favourable to the doctrine of the Romiſh church than the Vulgate, it muſt be confeſſed that the paſſage will not admit of that conſtruction. Judas, probably, did not dream of purgatory; but he is certainly repreſented to have prayed for the dead; and in the Greek, as well as in the Latin, the reconciliation is ſaid to have been made for the purpoſe of delivering the dead from ſin.

[C] It is ſaid in the nineteenth verſe of the ſixth chapter, that Eleazar, αυθαιρέτως επι το τυμπανον προσηγεν. And St. Paul, ſpeaking of martyrs who had ſuffered in hopes of a reſurrection, ſays, αλλοι δε ἐτυμπανισθησαν, from which expreſſion ſome conceive that the apoſtle alludes to the death of Eleazar, ſuppoſing τυμπανον to ſignify ſome ſpecific engine of torture. If the apoſtle did refer to the account of this book, which is a point much controverted, it will only prove that the relation is true.

" holy men who were moved by the Holy Ghoſt." St. Auſtin juſtly remarked, in anſwer to the Circumcellion Donatiſts [D], who had urged the deſperate attempt of Razis [E], in defence of ſuicide: that they muſt have been hard preſſed for examples, to have recourſe to the book of Maccabees; for that this book was of ſubordinate authority, as not eſtabliſhed on the teſtimony of the Jewiſh church, or on that of Chriſt; and as received by the Chriſtian church only to be diſcreetly read; and that Razis, however diſtinguiſhed for valour, was not to be propoſed as an example to juſtify ſelf-murder [F]. The fathers in general, indeed, cite the book as an uſeful hiſtory [G]; but not as of authority in point of doctrine.

THERE are two other books entitled the Third and Fourth Books of Maccabees, which were never received by any church. That which is improperly ſtiled the third; and which in point of time ſhould be conſidered as the firſt; deſcribes the perſecution of Ptolemy Philopator againſt the Jews in Egypt, about A. M. 3789; and the miraculous delivery of thoſe who were expoſed in the Hypodrome of Alex-

[D] Theſe were a party of confederated ruffians of the fourth century, who practiſed and defended aſſaſſinations, and who recommended ſuicide when it could reſcue them from public puniſhment. Vid. Moſheim. Eccleſ. Hiſt. Cent. IV. Part II.

[E] Chap. xiv. 41.

[F] Auguſt. Epiſt. 61. ad Dulcit. Coſin's Scholaſt. Hiſt. § 81.

[G] Cyprian. Exhort. Martyr. § 11. Teſtim. L. III. § 4.

andria

andria to the fury of elephants. This is a work entitled to much reſpect; it is in the moſt ancient manuſcript copies of the Septuagint [H], and is cited by the fathers [I], but never having been found in the Vulgate, which verſion was univerſally uſed in the Weſtern church, and from which our tranſlations were made, it never was admitted into our Bibles. Grotius ſuppoſes it to have been written ſoon after the book of Eccleſiaſticus. The hiſtory is not noticed by Joſephus; though in the ancient verſion of his ſecond book againſt Apion by Rufinus, there are ſome particulars that ſeem to allude to it.

THE book, which is uſually called the Fourth Book of the Maccabees, and which contains an hiſtory of the pontificate of John Hyrcanus, was firſt publiſhed in the Paris Polyglot as an Arabic hiſtory of the Maccabees. It is ſuppoſed to have been a tranſlation of the work ſeen by Sixtus Senenſis [K] in a Greek manuſcript at Lyons, and which was afterwards burnt [L]; though according to Calmet's account [M], it ſhould ſeem to have been a different work from that mentioned by early writers as a

[H] It is in the Alexandrian manuſcript at St. James's, and in the Vatican manuſcript at Rome.

[I] Euſeb. Chron. An. 1800. Theod. in Dan. xi. 7. Canon. Apoſt. 85. Athan. Synop. Niceph. vid. Arab. Ver. Paris Polyglot.

[K] Sixt. Senen. Biblot. L. I. & Bib. Maxim. a Fran. de la Haye.

[L] Selden. de Succeſſ. in Pontif.

[M] Calmet. Preface ſur le Quat. Livre des Maccab.

fourth

fourth book of the Maccabees [N]. It ſeems to have been originally written in Hebrew; and the Arabic, or the Greek tranſlator, from whoſe work the Arabic was made, lived after the deſtruction of the ſecond temple by the Romans, as appears from ſome particulars. The book differs in many reſpects from the relations of Joſephus. Calmet thinks, that the diſcourſe on the power of reaſon, before mentioned as the work of Joſephus, was the original fourth book of Maccabees, which in many Greek manuſcripts is placed with the other three [O].

It may be added, that in two ancient Hebrew manuſcripts in the Bodleian library, as alſo in one at Leipſic, there follows after Eſther, as a book of the Bible, without any title or introduction, an hiſtory of the Maccabees written in Chaldee, which differs widely from our apocryphal books. It appears to have been originally written in Chaldee, and to have been tranſlated into Hebrew. It is probably a very ancient production, and contains many remarkable particulars [P].

[N] Athan. Synop. Syncell. Philaſtr. Vid. Coteler. Not. in Can. Apoſt. p. 117, 138.

[O] Not. Cambeſis in Joſeph. Lib. de Imper. Ration. Cotel. Not. in Can. Apoſt. p. 339.

[P] The Hebrew copy has been publiſhed in a very corrupt ſtate by Bartoloccius. Vid. Kennicott, No. 18, Pentat. Pſal. Megill. 80, p. 55, 56. on Hebrew and Samaritan manuſcript, p. 534.

FINIS.

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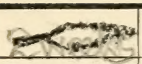
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